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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
REVIEWS	
Mr. Gardiner's History	441
The New Frankness	442
Walter Savage Landor	443
Wordsworthiana	444
Ghosts: Belief and Unbelief	445
The Irish Wonderworld	446
BRIEFER MENTION	447
NOTES AND NEWS	449
AMERICAN AND ENGLISH CRITICISM	451
THE CASE FOR LATIN VERSES	452
PARIS LETTERS	452
Did SHAKESPEARE WRITE FOR POSTERITY?	453
THE BOOK MARKET	454
THE WEEK	455
NEW BOOKS RECEIVED	456
CORRESPONDENCE	458
BOOK REVIEWS REVIEWED	459
FICTION SUPPLEMENT	113-116

## NOTICE.

The issue of THE ACADEMY for next week, December 4th, will consist of a Double Number in a Coloured Cover. It will contain some further remarks on an Academy of Letters, a Review of Literature in 1897, a number of articles on Writers of younger reputation, Special Articles on literary subjects, and notices of Christmas and other New Books. Advertisements should reach this Office by next Thursday morning.

## REVIEWS.

## MR. GARDINER'S HISTORY.

*History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649-1660.* By Samuel Rawson Gardiner. Vol. II., 1651-1654. (Longmans & Co.)

MR. GARDINER has approached one step nearer to the completion of his great task. The new volume carries us from the battle of Worcester to the eve of the meeting of the first Parliament of the Protectorate. It covers the subjugation of Scotland, Ireland, and the Colonies, the Dutch War, the dissolution of the Long Parliament, the career of the Nominated Parliament, the transition from the Commonwealth to the Protectorate, the long and intricate negotiations of Cromwell for alliance with France and Spain. We are thus allowed to follow to their end the course of several important episodes and determining crises of the interesting story: we are left on the threshold of others equally familiar, which will form the main theme of the next instalment. Now, Mr. Gardiner's successive volumes are always looked for with great eagerness; but his Ford Lectures at Oxford last year made students more than usually anxious for his full version of the Dutch War and the negotiations with France and Spain. Indeed, this volume was advertised a year ago. Rumour at-

tributed its non-appearance to the policy of the publishers. A long-suffering public, it was supposed, could not digest more than two new books from Mr. Gardiner in one year, and so students have been kept waiting while our author expounded to Father Gerard "What Gunpowder Plot was," and, for the benefit of the general reader, fitted Cromwell into his "Place in History." Rumour is notoriously "a false jade," and our consolation will be that the next instalment of the fascinating story should come all the more quickly.

There are probably only two or three men in England who are in the least degree qualified to sit in judgment on Mr. Gardiner's work, and of these the most competent rises in this volume almost to the dignity of a collaborateur. The generous appreciation accorded by the preface to the labours of Mr. C. H. Firth prepares us for the frequent mention of his name in the footnotes throughout the book. But the wealth of new material which his investigations have placed at Mr. Gardiner's disposal has in places combined with the author's own discoveries to upset a proportionate treatment of the many points which came under survey. Thus, one chapter suffices for the settlement of Ireland after Cromwell's departure—the material has been long accessible. But Mr. Firth's recent work for the Scottish Historical Society—which, to save Scotch pride, bears the vague titles of "Scotland and the Commonwealth" and "Scotland and the Protectorate"—has necessitated a long and, to speak truth, very wearisome account of the comparatively unimportant marchings and counter-marchings connected with the suppression of Glencairn's rising in 1654.

The fact is that, from an artistic point of view, Mr. Gardiner sticks too conscientiously to his theory of the chronological study of history. In such a treatment facts must needs lose much of their relative significance. Everything that is known has an equal right to a place in the narrative. The story will no doubt sometimes tell itself, but often it will not be worth the space devoted to it, and in any case it will lose much in the telling. At any rate, this will be the feeling of many readers as they work their way through Mr. Gardiner's new volume. They must have felt it in his previous books. Considering the interest of the narrative, this defect, if defect it is, will seem to many to reach its extremest form in the present volume. When Mr. Gardiner chooses, he can be simple and direct enough; it is not from confusion of thought in the writer that the narrative is allowed at times to meander through pages of continuous and seemingly endless detail. At times, no doubt, it is the wealth of available material which is the cause. Generally speaking, however, Mr. Gardiner is thinking of his subject rather than of his readers, and the fitting together of the Chinese puzzle into which history written from original materials too often resolves itself, becomes an exercise which is its own reward. Thus much as to the manner.

Despite all that has been written on the Great Rebellion, Mr. Gardiner is so far a pioneer in the thorny subject which he is

slowly traversing, that, even if he had a far less lucid style, it would be necessary to read his book. For he is gradually dissipating the fog (sometimes, it may be, the halo) in which strong party prejudice on one side or the other has wrapped the heroes of the age. We learn of Ireton's "incompetency as a commander," which was "displayed alike in his readiness to undertake more than he was able to accomplish and in his failure to proportion his means to the objects which he had in view." We can no longer treat Blake as the "seventeenth century Nelson"; nor had he any "of that innovating tactical skill which had enabled Cromwell to convert a mere success into a crushing victory." Tromp was the hero of the Dutch War: Blake was merely "a bold and inspiring commander." The ultimate success of the English fleet was due entirely to its superior equipment. Twice at least, in the course of the war, the Dutch admirals and sailors, as skilful and brave as their English rivals, had to retire from a drawn battle because of the failure of their ammunition and supplies through the carelessness of the responsible administration. Indeed, the whole account of the naval warfare is admirable, and worthy to be placed alongside of Mr. Gardiner's studies in military history. Captain Mahan himself could scarcely surpass them. Like one of the Commonwealth commanders of whom he speaks, Mr. Gardiner passes from the land to the sea, and, at any rate, to the amateur in such matters, he seems equally at home on either. And as the inherent superiority of the English sailors at all times has been an article of our patriotic creed, so has a sceptical age sneered with Macaulay at the Puritans who prohibited amusements such as bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it afforded pleasure to the spectators. We may no longer nurse this uncharitable belief. The benchers of the Middle Temple prefaced their masque with the singing of the Hundredth Psalm, but a masque included singing, and even dancing. The objections to "promiscuous dancing"—which we take to mean the dancing of the two sexes together—may have been objectionable to the more austere Puritans for the reason which led them to prohibit bear-baiting and bull-baiting, namely, "the immorality which these exhibitions fostered." But amusement of all kinds, even to the extent of practical joking, was not banished from England by the vehemence of a few morbid fanatics. "Oliver loved an innocent jest," and was a friend to outdoor sports and indoor amusements. After so great a disillusionment we shall not be surprised to learn that Barebones Parliament was not a contemporary nickname, nor—most cherished illusion of all—that Tromp's triumphant voyage down the Channel after the Dutch victory off Dungeness with the emblematical broom tied to his masthead, is based on no reliable evidence.

But, after all, for most of us the chief interest of the Commonwealth and Protectorate will centre round the revelation it affords of Cromwell's own character. To the ardent believer in the virtues of democracy it must ever be a source of bitter disappointment to discover how few great men

are thrown up by a revolution. The French Revolution produced none of first-rate capacity except Mirabeau and Danton. Cromwell was the sole giant of the English Rebellion. And Cromwell is the hero of Mr. Gardiner's great epic. But he is not drawn as Carlyle drew his heroes—in an idealised form. As the story unfolds itself, his limitations become increasingly clearer. To our thinking he is none the less hero because he is thereby made more of a man. We sometimes wonder whether in Mr. Gardiner's own case there has not been, in the course of his study of the period, something of a disillusionment regarding his own hero. Would he always have so frankly described him as "eager to make the best of both worlds"? And does he not almost contradict himself in the next sentence when he declares that "the tragedy of his (Cromwell's) career lies in the inevitable result that his efforts to establish religion and morality melted away as the morning mist, whilst his abiding influence was built upon the vigour with which he promoted the material aims of his countrymen"? Indeed, the characteristic of the whole period spanned by this volume is the gradual predominance in the minds of Englishmen in general, of material, mundane aims, as Mr. Gardiner seems to prefer to call them, over the religious ideals of the Rebellion itself:

"For a time after the outbreak of the Civil War there had been a tendency to subordinate all other considerations to spiritual and ideal aims; to advance the godly and depress the profane had been the aim of statesmen and soldiers. Now, as ever happens, the neglected body of man, with its material needs and passions, was beginning to assert itself. Though there had been an ideal element in the conquest of Ireland and Scotland, a desire to render the populations of those countries better and happier by forcing upon them in the one case English religion, in the other case English justice and toleration, there had been a painfully material side as well; a greed for land or power, and, at the best, a determination to impose the English yoke upon peoples firmly purposed to lead their own life in their own fashion. The new commercial policy (inaugurated by the Navigation Act) did not profess to have other than material aims. The intention of its framers, by the very nature of the case, was not to make England better or nobler, but to make her rich-r."

Cromwell himself passed through the same transition. In Mr. Gardiner's opinion, it is this combination of religious and mundane interests in his policy "which has raised Cromwell to the position of the national hero of the nineteenth century." But whereas before the Dutch War religious considerations held the first place in his mind, his determination to attack Spain in the West Indies, and yet to remain at peace with her in Europe, is interpreted by Mr. Gardiner as marking the time when the first place is given to "mundane endeavour." The conclusion which he draws—they are the closing words of the volume—is that

"if the Restoration is to be regarded as a return of a mode of thought anterior to Puritanism, it may fairly be said that the spirit of the Restoration had at last effected a lodgment within the bosom of Oliver himself."

The other prominent clue given by this volume to Mr. Gardiner's own interpreta-

tion of Cromwell's character calls for less comment, because it is the central feature of his recent lectures on "Cromwell's Place in History." Cromwell's claim to the character of a constructive statesman practically disappears in Mr. Gardiner's handling. Neither in home nor in foreign politics had he a programme of his own. He was a pure opportunist. It was for others to suggest; and to almost all suggestions, however wild, he would listen. It was enough for him to seize the moment for action, to cut the knot instead of making any attempt patiently to unloose it. This volume affords two admirable illustrations of the part which Cromwell played in the determination of events. In the controversy between Lambert desiring a freely elected successor to the effete Long Parliament, and Harrison who urged an assembly of the Godly, Cromwell's religious side came uppermost, and, after long controversy, he decided for Harrison. "It was," remarks Mr. Gardiner in passing, "the impossibility of reconciling these two views which ultimately wrecked the revolution and restored the monarchy." But the failure of the impracticable body taught him a lesson, and, as between France and Spain, the protracted negotiations ended at length in favour of France because Spain could not give the sum which Cromwell demanded as the price of English aid. The practical, mundane consideration outweighed all others in the ultimate decision.

Such are a few of the important topics treated in this volume. Its interest lies mainly in foreign policy. But the new constitution has been sketched. The "Instrument of Government" has established the Protectorate and has guaranteed a Parliament. We know already, from the Ford Lectures, that Mr. Gardiner has his own views on the causes of the dissolution of the first Parliament summoned under the Instrument. We must wait patiently for the volume which should take us almost within sight of Cromwell's death.

#### THE NEW FRANKNESS.

*Studies in Frankness.* By Charles Whibley.  
(W. Heinemann.)

MR. WHIBLEY won and deserved much credit for these essays when they first appeared. One has but to turn to pages 118 and 119, and read his analysis of the style of Apuleius to see what a keen eye he has for some of the minor beauties of prose. Had he confined himself to such work he would have earned nothing but praise. A different complexion is, however, given to his object by the essay in which he introduces and links together the different papers. With this composition, as the newer and most important thing in the volume, we shall principally deal. Unfortunately Mr. Whibley does not attend to his own maxims. "There is not and there can never be," he writes, "any legitimate purpose in print save pleasure and delight." This is directed against such novelists as are buoyed up with a vain

hope of improving mankind. But he himself informs his essays with a purpose far other than pleasure and delight; it is to preach a gospel of license, and to show that it is proper to write "a thousand dishevelled words" that it is shameful to use in conversation.

Now, if this matter is to be discussed, it behoved Mr. Whibley to state his case with precision and clearness. Against whom is his railing directed? We are told that the Realist says this, the Puritan that, the Prude and the Pedant something else, but these are only different names for a stuffed figure who is put up merely to be knocked down. Apparently there is no critic of standing who has expressed the views that excite his anger, and his rage has to go back to Jeremy Collier—the "redoubtable enemy of stage-plays," as Matthew Arnold called him. What was the use of dragging Jeremy from his grave? He is clean forgotten by all but a few. The writer looks at life through the convention of his day and generation. You do not expect to find in Aristophanes the morality of the nineteenth century; you read him for his cleverness, his wit, and his fancy, and take the morality as part of the time and the man. It is the same with Boccaccio, with Cervantes, with Chaucer, and Shakespeare, and Fielding. Can Mr. Whibley name any critic of repute who says of any masterpiece it should be a closed book because the author does not write for Exeter Hall? So far there is scarcely room for argument. Unfortunately for himself, Mr. Whibley does not stop at this point. He is one of those who, once mounted on an idea, cannot draw rein till it is ridden to death, and who, by wild extravagance, do more harm than good to any cause they attempt to champion.

By dint of probably the worst logic that ever got into print, he seeks to convince the reader that this license ought to be exercised as freely to-day as it was a thousand years ago. The cardinal point of his argument, when shorn of its prolix setting, can be put into a nutshell. He admits that to the "privacies and restraints"—the absence of frankness—imposed by the need of purity "we owe our morals, our manners, the very elegancies of human conduct." To these should have added vigour. Without purity, strength—physical and intellectual—is bound to decay; the ultimate and rational justification of purity is its necessity to a clean and wholesome mind in a clean and wholesome body. Whoever tampers with it is sinning against the birthright of men and women, for impurity is in itself decay. But this is not a proposition he seeks to controvert. Life and literature stand on a different footing, he argues. "Life is governed by the laws of habit and empire; literature bows only to its own dictates." But the inversion of this is equally true. Life has evolved its laws and habits out of its necessities, and may, with equal truth, be said to bow only to its own dictates; so that the sonorous platitude might, after all, have been uttered by a wiseacre. If ever there was a truth at once simple and incontrovertible, it is that life includes literature, or, conversely, that literature is only a part (and not the largest part) of life. But Mr.

Whibley's whole case rests on the contention that the part is greater than the whole—in his own words, that "literature transcends the narrow world of life; knows not the limits which are set upon the hardiest traveller." By what sense, we should like to ask, is Mr. Charles Whibley going to travel beyond what is included in life? Some years before his death we remember Mr. Louis Stevenson discussed the very point, and concluded that even the great world of Shakespeare was but made up of different embodiments of himself.

No doubt Mr. Whibley will have his answer pat. He could not have signed his name to so many contradictions but for a defect that bars the way to his becoming a great critic. It is the almost entire absence of imagination and sympathy which is manifest in every sentence. Words to him are but words and nothing more, and their value "does not depend upon the ideas they connote." Yes, but they will not obey him, and we judge a theory by its outcome. He asks light and colour and music from words, and they but rumble in a muddy stream. Let anyone who doubts it compare the worst page of *Gaston de Latour* with the best in the book before us; and Mr. Pater is the fount and origin of the philosophy, much as it has changed its complexion. When Mr. Whibley is most importunate in his demand for pictorial quality, the result is some such horror as this: "Their gulching bellies refuted the plea of hunger and beggary." In the second place, he has no eye for that hall-mark of imagination which marks the highest art; his chief delight is in the second-rate work of writers. For example, there is little room for argument about the merits of Poe's short stories; they are marvels of ingenious mechanism, but they have never got past the early stage of invention; you can tell by the very writing that Poe never reached the point of imagining them; hence their use has been only that of quarries to others. But invention is enough for Mr. Whibley; and Poe, we are gravely told, is still the "dominant influence of three literatures." In other words, it is raw material, not great and perfect art, that delights him. He grumbles at Adlington for glossing over the filthiest passages in the *Golden Ass*, and at Sterne for not being more plain-spoken. From the great pages of Rabelais he has learned nothing but this so-called frankness. We willingly admit the admirable perseverance with which he has worked out the personal history of the subjects of these essays; but there, again, the unimaginative man has halted where another would not have been content till he had realised for us period and environment. And, if one proof more be required, we may point to his contentment with minor beauties, his hunt after the small critic, his happiness with the small author.

Up to a certain point we have no fault to find with this. There is a place, and no dishonourable one, for Mr. Whibley in the field of letters; but let him stick to his last. When he comes forth to lay down the law about art and morals we can but answer "No; for a guide on these high matters we demand someone of wider outlook and broader sympathies, and a more liberal

mind." As to this question of morality, we know that literature is under the same great laws as life itself, and that from Homer to Walter Scott it has been a reflection of life, and that the greatest writers, those whose standing is unquestioned, and who have given us most pleasure, have not been ashamed to feel that mankind was the better of their having lived and written. It was a dying satisfaction to Scott that he had been on the side of goodness as it had been to Fielding before him, to Lord Tennyson as it was to Robert Browning, as it must be to every strong and healthy man. A retrogression of morals, a growth of that licentious frankness advocated by Mr. Whibley, ever has been in our own history and in that of other countries an infallible symptom of decay. Cant is bad, and the cant of morality is the most sickening of all, but cant itself is better than the new frankness.

#### WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

*Letters and Unpublished Writings of Landor.*  
By Stephen Wheeler. (Bentley.)

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, though always regarded by a distinguished circle as a man of genius, has not until recently taken his place among the immortals, in general opinion. Mr. Sidney Colvin, probably more than anyone, has once and for all given Landor his due place in the popular sense. What Mr. Forster had attempted with labour, Mr. Colvin accomplished with ease, chiefly because he brought to bear on his subject not merely a fine scholarship and industry, but a remarkable insight into the humanity of the man of whom he wrote. We may take it, then, as beyond cavil that Landor will retain henceforward his due position among the great English writers. That any public recognition of him has been, to some extent, tardy is easily explained. Landor, with all his splendid intellectual gift, was greatly lacking in the emotional force which, when added to great mental power, makes an irresistible appeal. Not only this, but he rather courted a certain loneliness; indeed, he might even say that to some extent he assumed the attitude of one apart. Not that this would have made any very real difference, for the man was, in his nature, solitary; but we cannot help thinking that he rather emphasised in his writing and conversation a characteristic which was, in truth, inborn. Moreover, he was rarely in touch with his own time, at any rate, in his writings. By nature he was Roman, by intellect Athenian. Hence we find in him a certain superb scorn for the ill-considered and too emotional writing of the present day. How far, indeed, modern literature has a bias towards emotion and sentiment we have no space at present to discuss; but undoubtedly this tendency has been felt and attacked by such a really great writer as Mr. Meredith. In any case, the three reasons we have given will be enough to account for a certain delay in popular enthusiasm towards Walter Savage Landor.

The present book by Mr. Stephen Wheeler will not, we think, add greatly to the fame of Landor. Interesting much of it undoubtedly is; but we cannot conscientiously say that either by the prose or the poetry, here published for the first time, any real addition will be made to an already secure reputation. The countenance of Landor has an aspect original and powerful, though probably no really excellent portrait of him is to be found. He himself appeared to prefer the likeness of him by Sir William Boxall, which, however, Mr. Colvin considers benignant and feeble. Partly, however, because of Landor's own preference, and also because, in stating his preference, he makes an interesting self-revelation, we may quote what he says of the portrait:

"Perhaps, when I am in the grave, curiosity may be excited to know what kind of countenance that creature had who imitated nobody, and whom nobody imitated; the man who walked through the crowd of poets and prosemen and never was touched by anyone's skirts; who walked up to the ancients and talked with them familiarly, but never took a sup of wine or crust of bread in their houses. If this should happen, and it probably will within your lifetime, then let the good people see the old man's head by Boxall."

So far as we can gather, not merely by actual portraits, but by the personal description of the Countess of Blessington, Landor had a face of rugged intellectuality, with eyes of quick intelligence, and a mouth always on the edge of human kindness. Though in the opinion of the present writer Landor's fame rests as much on his poetry as his prose, and especially on the splendid poem of "Gebir," which was an especial favourite with Shelley, most readers will know him best by the "Imaginary Conversations." Three additions are here made, though one of them appears finally in verse form. The first here printed will undoubtedly be read with the greatest interest. This is an imaginary conversation between Savonarola and the Prior of San Marco. Unfortunately, this conversation is "imaginary" in the worst sense. In the other conversations Landor has never, so far as we are aware, outraged, at any rate, probabilities; and it is half the charm of these compositions that the author almost persuades us that they actually took place. It was impossible, however, that Savonarola could have had any such conversation with the Prior as is here described. Nor, as a matter of fact, was Savonarola, though put to the extreme of torture, actually burnt, as he is here represented to have been. He was hanged with two monks—Domenicho, of Padua, and Silvestro Maruti. The actual facts of that celebrated death being so well known, the force of the following passage is almost altogether lost:

#### SAVONAROLA.

"My Holy Father, the Father who is in heaven, has too often found me guilty, even from infancy. Nevertheless has He deigned to show me the light of His countenance, and to confer on me the office of proclaiming His will. And now His right hand guides me on the road to expiate my many sins."

PRIOR.

"Thy many sins? What mortal ever lived more chastely, more charitably, more devoutly? And to die so! Oh, God of Mercy! Can human flesh endure the surrounding flames?"

SAVONAROLA.

"Yes; that flesh which God has prepared for it."

If this passage suffers something from a perversion of actual fact, the concluding part of the dialogue is fine in the extreme. And here let us point out what has sometimes been ignored—the great dramatic faculty which Landor shows, quite apart from the beauty and reticence of his dialogue.

PRIOR.

"What noise is that I hear? Whither are coming those four carts? With what are they laden?"

SAVONAROLA.

"I will tell thee."

PRIOR.

"But why dost thou also rise from thy chair?"

SAVONAROLA.

"Those carts are laden with faggots and stakes; one of the stoutest is several ells long. What a number of poor starving creatures might be comforted at Christmas by such a quantity of materials!"

That one line, "But why dost thou also rise from thy chair?" gives us the authentic thrill which the great dramatists give. The second dialogue is not only greatly inferior to the first, but quite inferior to any other of the "Imaginary Conversations." It is supposed to take place between the Countess of Albany, the widow of the Young Pretender, who died so miserably after his splendid and forlorn expedition, and Alfieri, the lover of the Countess. There is nothing here that seems to call for any special comment, except that Landor was evidently not in the vein when he wrote it. A note, however, which he appends describing the death-bed of the heart-broken poet is decidedly interesting. Alfieri turns on his bed to the priest who has been sent to him, and says, "Who are you? I don't know you, and I don't want you, and I won't have you." The third conversation, which finally took verse form, is a description of the appearance of Joan of Arc before her judge, the bishop of Beauvais. Here, again, we are not greatly impressed. The whole scene has a frigid cleverness about it, which is never for a moment convincing. It is an interesting intellectual exercise, done into verse—correct, flat, and uninspired. As a specimen we may take some lines from the concluding speech of Joan of Arc:

JOAN.

"I am no sorceress, no prophetess;  
But this, O man in ermine, I foretell:  
Thou and hoë round thee shall ere long  
revere

You dead swart, England shall rue the day  
Saxon and French—her empire totters. Pile,  
Ye seniers, who guard those hundred heads  
Against a sh-herdless in bonds—pile high  
The faggots round the stake that stands  
upright.

And roll the barrel gently down the street,  
Lest the pitch burst the hoops and mess the  
way."

This is a quite fair specimen of the whole scene, never for a moment charged with colour, or passion, or even vigour.

Coming to Landor's detached thoughts and writings by the way, it is interesting to know that he would sooner have written Gray's "The boast of heraldry," &c., and George Herbert's lovely verse, beginning "Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright," than any other verse ever penned; and that, perhaps, his favourite couplet was Tibullus'

"Te spectem, supra mihi cum venerit hora  
Te teneam moriens deficiente manu."

The beauty of "deficiente manu" is probably impossible to translate into English; and Landor has certainly not done it in

"And hold your hand to the last clasp in mine."

The word "deficiente" gives the sense of a gradual failing and faltering of touch, which is quite missed in the commonplace "last clasp." It is curious to find emphasised here what is already known—Landor's preference of Ovid to Virgil. Undoubtedly the Ovidian elegiacs are well-nigh perfect of its kind, but it is apt to pall with its repeated sweetness, and cannot for a moment be compared to the ever-varied, ever-sonorous music of the Virgilian hexameter. We are glad to find him attacking the absurdly inadequate

"Warble his native wood-notes wild,"

which Landor, by the way, ascribes to Ben Jonson. He has here such an excellent criticism on Shakespeare that it will bear quotation:

"Shakespeare was no warbler, nor were wood-notes his. . . . On the contrary, they were elaborate, and the thoughts were often far-sought and quaint. . . . Imagination, not fancy, possessed him when he made Caliban his slave, and when he posset the heart of Miranda."

As to Landor's feeling towards "Rose Aylmer," it is probable that it was not so much a deep emotion as an imaginative yearning. Poets love through their imagination, and the feeling is often very real; but it is not to be confounded with the affection of the average man. We have only to cite Dante's feeling towards Beatrice, or Shelley's as expressed in *Epirrhodion*, or that of Shakespeare in the Sonnets. Nor is it to the point to urge that Landor's tenderness lasted till death. It is precisely this kind of clarified devotion which is often the most durable. As to the identity of J. S., it seems to us something of an impertinence to inquire. This is precisely the kind of speculation which the late Lord Tennyson so rightly, if in somewhat morbid fashion, attacked. In one of his letters which are here quoted, Landor, in fact, makes an interesting reference to Tennyson: "I wish our present poets would pay more attention to immovable and solid models, and less to hollow and light plaster. . . . Do not think I undervalue this excellent man's poetry." With a little reflection, one must admit this to be a very sound criticism on much of Lord Tennyson's work. As to Landor's judgments, generally, on his contemporaries, they are far too biased by personal matters. He thinks "The Curse of Kehama" one of our greatest poems. His

opinions are chiefly interesting as being those of one who spanned such a large period in our literature. But the fact is, that contemporary opinions of authors by authors are utterly misleading, fascinating as they may be to read. Here, for instance, we find Coleridge saying of Landor himself, "He has never learned, with all his energy, to write simple and lucid English." The following line by Landor, on the chief poets of his time, is, in a way, excellent:

"Asthmatic Wordsworth, Byron piping hot." Byron, however, wrote of Landor:

"That deep-mouthed Boetian Savage Landor  
Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's  
gander."

It is curious to note that Landor foresaw the budding genius of Mrs. Browning, a writer in almost all respects the exact opposite of himself. Though we cannot think that the specimens of Landor here given will contribute greatly to his fame, this book is excellent reading throughout; and if it does not add a leaf to his laurel, it emphasises a great and lovable personality.

#### WORDSWORTHIANA.

*A Primer of Wordsworth.* By Laurie Magnus. (Methuen.)

*Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth.* Edited by William Knight. (Macmillan & Co.)

*Poems in Two Volumes.* By William Wordsworth. Reprinted from the Original Edition of 1807. Edited by Thomas Hutchinson. (Nutt.)

*Four Poets: Selections from Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats.* Selected by Oswald Crawford. (Chapman & Hall.)

M. LEGOUIS' interesting study of Wordsworth seems to have given the signal for a whole number of works on the same inexhaustible subject. Here are four books within a week, wholly or in large part devoted to him. A fifth, Mr. Andrew Lang's anthology, is reserved for separate treatment.

We do not think that a primer of a poet's work is a very happy thing to write. Apart from the unpleasant associations of the name, it implies a formality and rigidity of treatment which does not lend itself to the most fruitful criticism. So long as facts are dealt with it is all right. Mr. Magnus's brief biography of Wordsworth and his bibliography of books by and about him are most useful; but when he comes to the discussion of the poems he is clearly hampered by having to arrange them under "Longer Poems," "Shorter Poems," "Memorials of Tours and Sonnets," and to write the orthodox little bit about each piece in turn. It is a pity, for both in these chapters and in the critical essay proper which Mr. Magnus appends to them there is some excellent appreciation—subtle, sympathetic, discriminating. And Mr. Magnus has the gift of putting his critical views effectively. Here are two telling sentences on Wordsworth's mistakes in revising some of his early poems:

"Form had misled his early genius into *bizarries* and conceits of style; in later life,

therefore, the mere presence of style, super-added as such, conveyed occasionally to his morbid remorse a feeling of distrust and suspicion. Often enough he sacrificed linguistic beauty, spontaneously attained in the glow of creation, to the chilling quality of logical precision, and, puzzled as it were by his own excellence, exerted himself for a pedantic reconstruction of his musical thought."

Mr. Magnus's judgment frequently carries us with him, but we part company when he begins a polemic against *The Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*. He takes the line that it is not up to the level of modern psychology, which "discovers the child 'trailing' quite other and more definite qualities than 'clouds of glory' from its quadrumanous ancestors." This sort of thing—it is really a divergence from Mr. Magnus's normal manner—rather makes us gasp. And surely "Herbart's theory of the individual's life following the stages of the race's culture" is heavy artillery to bring up against a poem.

The journals of Dorothy Wordsworth now published by Prof. Knight are of two kinds: there are domestic journals, written at Alfoxden in 1798, and at Grasmere at various periods from 1800 to 1803, and there are journals of travel, recording tours undertaken at home and abroad up to 1828. With large portions of these writings Prof. Knight and other biographers have already familiarised the world; the majority of them have never hitherto been printed in full. Nor are they now so printed. This is Prof. Knight's *Apologia*:

"All the journals contain numerous trivial details, which bear ample witness to the 'plain living and high thinking' of the Wordsworth household; and in this edition samples of these details are given—but there is no need to record all the cases in which the sister wrote 'To-day I mended William's shirts,' or 'William gathered sticks,' or 'I went in search of eggs,' &c., &c."

It is churlish, perhaps, to look a gift-horse in the mouth; but, grateful as we are to Prof. Knight for what he has afforded us, we are bound to say that the value of the boon seems immensely diminished by the absence of just those "trivial details" which he has elected to suppress. Nothing is in reality "trivial" which throws the slightest light on such unique and fascinating personalities as those of the Wordsworths, and surely, from the "human document" point of view, these faithful records of the daily life which they actually lived are of far greater importance than the more deliberate and artificial accounts of holiday tours in unfamiliar surroundings. Nor is our confidence, that Prof. Knight was justified in disregarding what Dorothy Wordsworth thought fit to preserve, in any way increased by a consideration of the state in which this process has left his text. What are we to make of this, for instance: "A poor girl called to beg, who had no work, and was going in search of it to Kendal. She slept in Mr. Benson's . . . and went off after breakfast in the morning with 7d. and a letter to the Mayor of Kendal." Why are we supposed not to care whether the girl slept in Mr. Benson's guest-chamber or his barn? Two pages later comes the following: "A succession of delicious views

from . . . to Brathay. We met near . . . a pretty little boy with a wallet over his shoulder." Surely this again is an irritating and motiveless mutilation. After all deductions, however, the book is a most welcome one, and we regret the impossibility of according to it the space it deserves. It does not, of course, in any essential point, modify our notions of Dorothy Wordsworth, or of her great brother, or of their serene life in the little Grasmere cottage; but it fills in many outlines, and renews and deepens our knowledge of one of the most delightful relationships in all literature.

Mr. Hutchinson's elegant reprint of the Poems of 1807, together with that of the *Lyrical Ballads* issued by the same publisher some years ago, will be of considerable value to the critical student of Wordsworth, who above all things desires to trace the gradual changes in the poet's literary creed, as they declare themselves in the constant and careful revision of his work. The nature of this revision is indicated in the notes appended by the editor, who also furnishes a preface and an exceedingly interesting essay on the structure of the Wordsworthian sonnet. "Professor Schiffer," however, to whom Mr. Hutchinson refers as the author of a book on English metre, should surely be "Professor Schipper." All the editorial matter is good and to the point, and we owe Mr. Hutchinson a special debt of gratitude for the happy identification of Louisa, the "dear Child of Nature," with Wordsworth's sister-in-law, Joanna Hutchinson. In a sense, of course, and as a literary manifesto, the *Lyrical Ballads* is the most important of all the Wordsworthian issues; but in quality of work, whether in the realm of ethical inspiration or in that of natural magic, the volumes of 1807 stand far before all others. Mr. Hutchinson pertinently points out that they furnish more nearly a half than a third of the poems included in Matthew Arnold's admirable selection. On the whole, this is a useful, as well as an admirably printed, book.

Mr. Oswald Crawfurd's choice from Wordsworth for his "Four Poets" volume is, on the whole, a happy one. But it is one of the beauties of making anthologies that no two anthologists ever agree in their admissions and exclusions. Personally, we should have had no hesitation in omitting "The Brothers," and replacing it by some half-dozen of the very best of the shorter poems for which Mr. Crawfurd has found no room. Among them should have been the first poem to "The Daisy," the lines "To H. C.," the sonnet "Nuns fret not in their convent's narrow room," and that exquisite one "To Sleep," that begins, "A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by." With Shelley we think that Mr. Crawfurd is more completely successful, and, of course, with the easier problems afforded by Keats and Coleridge, although Coleridge's "Frost at Midnight" should not have been forgotten.

#### GHOSTS: BELIEF AND UNBELIEF.

*Studies in Psychical Research.* By Frank Podmore. (Kegan, Paul & Co.)

*Real Ghost Stories.* By W. T. Stead. (Grant Richards.)

It is about fifteen years since actual and alleged supernatural or supernormal phenomena were first studied in a serious scientific spirit. The pioneers of the movement are now beginning to think that it is time for an interim stock-taking of the results. Mr. Myers has delivered his soul in an elaborate speculation on *The Subliminal Consciousness*. The Egeria of the Psychoical Research Society, Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, whose conclusions we should study with great interest, is as yet silent. In the meantime comes Mr. Podmore, who may be said to represent the sceptical right wing of the society, as Mr. Myers represents its credulous left wing, with a lucid and luminous survey of the whole field of inquiry. No one is more qualified to speak. Mr. Podmore has been an active researcher from the beginning; he took part with Mr. Myers and the late Mr. Gurney in the publication of *Phantasms of the Living*, and he has already written a tentative study of *Apparitions and Thought-Transference*. The present book is singularly judicial and singularly convincing. He has a firm grip of the primal canon of all investigation, the scientific law of economy: he will not posit hitherto unknown causes for phenomena until the limits of the action of known causes have been demonstrably passed.

Two known causes explain satisfactorily a large proportion of the phenomena with which the Psychical Research Society has to deal: human fraud and human folly. Or, if folly is too hard a word, the ineradicable tendency of the human mind to magnify and misreport any unusual and disturbing event. A careful and most impartial analysis of the evidence enables Mr. Podmore to find the operation of these causes in most of the spiritualistic and mediumistic marvels, as well as in the already exploded feats of Mme. Blavatsky and Eusapia Palladino. Nor can he consider the hypothesis of trickery disposed of in the cases of Mr. Stainton Moses or of the medium Daniel Home, on both of whom Mr. Myers relies much. In these two cases, however, trickery has never been absolutely proved. The *poltergeists*, troublesome spirits which throw coal about houses, are also, according to Mr. Podmore, frauds, generally the frauds of hysterical girls. Then Mr. Podmore stops to establish the existence of what is known as telepathy, or the direct transference, otherwise than through the ordinary channels of perception, of ideas from mind to mind. This he does from the observed facts of experimental thought-transference. Telepathy, he proceeds to suggest, explains such hallucinations, apparitions, premonitions, and clairvoyance as a rigid application of the rules of evidence leaves still in need of explanation. Finally, of course, comes the question, whether when the action of fraud and folly, and the action of ordinary tele-

pathy from living consciousnesses has been exhausted, there is still any residuum of facts to be explained; whether, that is to say, there is any room for an hypothesis of telepathic communication from disembodied consciousnesses or spirits. As to this Mr. Podmore declines to commit himself: the material is far from complete, but he suggests that if any such facts at present survive investigation they must be looked for in the trance-utterances of that most remarkable of all mediums, Mrs. Piper. Mrs. Piper is, of course, still under observation, and this is how psychical research at present stands.

Mr. Stead's *Real Ghost Stories* is a book of little scientific value to the student of hallucinations. Many tales are of ancient occurrence, and, therefore, of dubious evidence. Others are not told at first hand, others have the stamp of the magazine yarn upon them. The best vouched for are selected from the store of the Society for Psychical Research. The whole collection, however, is good ghostly reading, and Mr. Stead disarms criticism by making no scientific pretensions. He is in favour of study and inquiry, or, at all events, is opposed to absolute denial without inquiry. He discourages the public from playing at spiritualism, and encourages people who have "spontaneous" experiences of hallucinations or odd dreams, and so forth, to record them at once; the public is not likely to take the trouble.

As matters stand, almost every one will admit that sane and healthy people are occasionally hallucinated. The question is, have we any grounds for the presumption that such experiences are, occasionally, due to the action of a distant mind on the mind of the seer or percipient? This supposed action, called "Telepathy," is an idea as old, at least, as the sixteenth century, and is formulated, conjecturally, by Kant. Mr. Stead writes much about "The Thought Body," which is another affair, not admitted as even a feasible guess by the author of *The Critique of Pure Reason*. Several of Mr. Stead's hallucinations here are "empty," coinciding with no crisis in the history of the person seemingly seen. We can never get statistics as to the proportion of "empty" and of veridical hallucinations, and we cannot go far without them.

About evidence Mr. Stead is light-hearted. He cites Miss Strickland for the wraith of Queen Elizabeth; but what was Miss Strickland's authority? Apparently it was a MS. at Stoneyhurst, but we have not succeeded in getting a copy of that MS. In any case, the hallucination was empty and of a common kind—the apparition of a person well known to the seer, when that person is really in another room in the house. Mr. Stead's historical bogies are either unsupported by evidence, or the evidence is cited thus—"d'Aubigné, *Histoire Universelle*." Agrippa d'Aubigné, by the way, has a very touching ghost story of his own in his Memoirs. The Villiers ghost is backed here by no reference at all; and Towse, not Towers, was the seer. "Pausanias" and *bond fides* are examples of Mr. Stead's

indifference to classical learning. The Lyttelton story has earlier evidence than the *Gentleman's Magazine*—namely, that of absolutely contemporary diaries. "Laird Bucconi" is not a Scottish name; but why ask Mr. Stead to be critical?

Under the head of clairvoyance, Mr. Stead touches lightly on crystal-gazing, which he illustrates correctly by *illusions hypnagogiques* of his own. He gives very few cases of clairvoyance in this form, yet these are probably the best accessible proofs of *vue à distance*. The oldest crystal-gazer, or, rather, water-gazer, is Numa Pompilius, as reported by Varro, cited by St. Augustine in his *Civitas Dei*. Perhaps no popular belief is at once so ancient, so widely diffused, and so capable of being tested in modern experience.

Mr. Stead is wrong in thinking that Highland "Second Sight" is "always scenic"; there are auditory as well as visual hallucinations in the Highlands: they are often combined, see *Journal of the Caledonian Medical Society* for this year. If anything usually described as "ghostly" is worthy of the attention of psychologists, pathologists, and anthropologists, the whole set of topics must be examined in a way very unlike Mr. Stead's way. He represents an advance on Mrs. Crowe and Mr. Dale Owen, but not a very marked advance. His collection, however, is full of such reading as parents (and Mr. Stead himself) would not "put into the hands" of the young and nervous. Seers who want to be taken seriously must "make a note of" their visions at once, with any corroborative evidence which can be procured, and then send it to the officers of the S.P.R., who will conscientiously make their lives a burden to them. "The subject," says Mr. Stead, "is one which every common man and woman can understand." This is flattering, but incorrect. At present nobody can understand the subject at all. "The latent possibilities of our complex personality are imperfectly understood," says Mr. Stead, on the next page but one, in a flash of right reason. We ought not to omit the circumstance that Mr. Stead's version of Willington Mill is probably the best extant. The troubles of the Proctor family obviously inspired Lord Lytton's tale of *The Haunters and the Haunted*, the best "fancy" ghost story in English literature. Mr. Stead's *Brook House* is also a noble case of haunting.

"But when the glum Researchers come,  
The brutes of bogies go!"

#### THE IRISH WONDERWORLD.

*The Fairy Changeling, with Other Poems.* By Dora Sigerson (Mrs. Clement Shorter.) (John Lane.)

In 1893, Miss Dora Sigerson published a volume of "Verses," marked by characteristic and individual notes, which received something less than their due recognition: partly, may be, because they were accompanied by pieces, interesting indeed, but of less value. The book contained "All Souls' Night," "A Cry in the World," and "Cean

Duv Deelish"; which last, with one other, reappears in the writer's new volume. The later pieces are full of a wistful charm of imagination: witness this extract from "The Ballad of Maid Marjorie." She has lost her lover, and she meets a fisher, a "sad searcher of the sea," whom she questions upon his melancholy and his looks of fear. The sea had given up one of its dead into his net.

- .. And was he young, and was he fair ?  
    'Oh, cruel to behold !  
    In his white face the joy of life  
        Not yet had grown a-cold.'
- Oh, pale you are, and full of prayer,  
    For one who sails the sea.'  
• Because the dead looked up and spoke,  
    Poor maiden Marjorie.'
- What said he, that you seem so sad,  
    O fisher of the sea ?  
(Alack, I knew it was my love,  
    Who fain would speak to me !)
- He said, " Beware a woman's mouth—  
    A rose that bears a thorn."
- At, me ! these lips shall smile no more  
    That gave my lover scorn.'
- He said, " Beware a woman's eyes,  
    They pierce you with their death.",  
• Then falling tears shall make them blind  
    That robbed my dear of breath.'
- He said, " Beware a woman's hair—  
    A serpent's coil of gold."
- Then will I shear the cruel locks  
    That crushed him in their fold.'
- He said, " Beware a woman's heart,  
    As you would shun the reef."
- So let it break within my breast,  
    And perish of my grief.'
- He raised his hands ; a woman's name  
    Thrice bitterly he cried :
- My net had parted with the strain ;  
    He vanished in the tide.'
- A woman's name ! What name but mine,  
    O fisher of the sea ?
- A woman's name, but not your nam',  
    Poor maiden Marjorie.'

Another forcible poem is "The Suicide's Grave," with its questioning stanzas, as thus :

"What did you hear when you opened the doors of death ?  
Was it the sob of a thrush, or a slow sweet breath  
Of the perfumed air that blew through the doors with you,  
That you fought so hard to regain the world you knew? . . . . .

"Or was it in death's cold land there was no perfume  
Of the scented flowers, or lilt of a bird's gay tune ?  
No sea there, or no cool of a wind's fresh breath,  
No woods, no plains, no dreams, and alas ! no death ?"

There are many poems in the volume, lyrical in many moods, and scarce one without its arresting image: but to many the most acceptable will be the legends, fairy tales, facts or fictions of the "Irish Wonderworld," from which the writer draws much of her inspiration. Such are "The Fairy Changeling," the fine "Ballad of the Little Black Hound," and that of the "Fairy Thorn-Tree," to name but these. Here is the sense of humanity "moving

about in worlds not realised." It is a sense variously felt in the poems and other work of such writers as Mr. Yeats, Mrs. Hinkson, Miss Nora Hopper, Miss Fiona Macleod, and "A. E." It were well, if such writers were left to do their work without let or hindrance from extreme criticism upon one hand and uncritical enthusiasm on the other. "I have a great penchant," writes Arnold in his Letters, "for the Celtic races with their melancholy and unprogressiveness." There is melancholy in Mrs. Shorter's poems, but certainly progressiveness and growth in her art.

### BRIEFER MENTION.

*Solomon Cesar Malan, D.D.: Memorials of his Life and Writings.* By the Rev. A. N. Malan. (Murray.)

DR. MALAN was a man of rare and remarkable learning. His library, now on the shelves of the Indian Institute at Oxford, is evidence of the width and variety of his acquaintance with Oriental tongues. On one occasion he performed the somewhat purposeless and irritating *tour-de-force* of translating the Lord's Prayer into seventy-one languages. Unfortunately this wealth of learning was largely rendered nugatory by an intellectual arrogance and a narrowness of view unexampled among Dryasdusts. Even his son and biographer writes:

"Complete reliance on self made him defiant of all opposition. He could not bear even the rebuff of a contrary opinion. He never would admit the possibility of two sides to a question. Those who ventured to disagree with him placed themselves beyond the pale of reason. Argument, as a rule, he disdained and eschewed. To him his conclusions were self-evident and unquestionable."

It is not in this temper that knowledge grows; nor will it be seriously advanced by the ripest scholar, who "for history generally professed contempt, declaring it to be based on 'lies.'" And so we find Dr. Malan fulminating to the last against the "higher criticism" of Drs. Driver and Cheyne, as in earlier years he had fulminated with Wilberforce against Evolution, and with Burdon against the Greek Text of Westcott and Hort, and the Revised translation of the New Testament. This, by the way, he had pledged himself never to use, *before it was published*. Into the private life of this extraordinary man, as revealed in his too voluminous biography, we have no space to go. He made close friendships, and was beloved in his parish. He liked birds, fishing, music, and painting. But he must have been difficult to live with. He required apologies if he was mistaken for Mr. Gladstone, whom he resembled. His sons looked upon his study with awe, and were reduced to hiding their undergraduate pipes in their mother's workbox. A friend became a Roman Catholic, and never afterwards would Dr. Malan speak to him. "Once, when they were brought face to face at the bend of a narrow lane, Mr. Malan turned abruptly, and retraced his steps at a rapid pace."

*The Legend of Sir Gawain.* By Jessie L. Weston. (Grimm Library: Nutt.)

GAWAIN, in later Arthurian romance, has sunk into a secondary position among the Knights of the Table Round. For Malory, Tennyson, and Morris he is an ungracious figure—irreverent, untrue, a light of love. But Malory's portrait is inconsistent, and in the earlier romances Gawain plays a much more prominent and sympathetic part. Miss Weston has made a gallant and learned attempt to disentangle the original Gawain myth from the general body of romance with which it has become complicated. She finds in him a solar culture-hero, at one time closely associated with Guinevere, but ousted from this position by Lancelot. These detailed studies, carried out with the fine scholarship shown by Miss Weston, are invaluable in clearing the path for the final survey of the tangled woods of Arthurian legend.

*English Masques.* With an Introduction by H. A. Evans. Warwick Library. (Blackie & Son.)

THE MASQUE is a very definite literary form, with a beginning, middle, and end, and lends itself very neatly to such a volume as the present. It need hardly be added that, for essential purposes, the masque is also Ben Jonson. Of the sixteen pieces printed by Mr. Evans, ten are Ben Jonson's, and with these Daniel's *Tuvelæ Goddesses*, Campion's *Lord's Masque*, Beaumont's *Masque of the Inner Temple* and Gray's *Inn*, Shirley's *Triumph of Peace*, Davenant's *Salmacida Spolia*, and the pretty anonymous

*Masque of Flowers* make up a very representative collection. Mr. Evans prefixes an excellent introduction, in which he expresses himself largely indebted to Dr. Scorgel's valuable monograph on *Die Englischen Maskenspiele*. He traces the evolution of the masque from the "disguising" which formed part of the *ludi domini regis* far back in the Middle Ages; its popularity under the Tudors; its even greater popularity when James, who loved display, succeeded Elizabeth, who loved acting; its hey-day under Jonson and Inigo Jones; and its final extinction under the weight of Prynne's *Histrionastix* and of the mass of Puritan sentiment which Prynne represented. Mr. Evans has performed his task well, although we do not think he has quite exhausted all the available material. He does not seem, for instance, to have used the Revels Accounts printed by Brewer among the Henry VIII. papers, which throw a good deal of light on the Court entertainments of that period.

*The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome.* A Companion Book for Students and Travellers. By Rodolfo Lanciani. (Macmillan & Co.)

IN the study of the ruins of Ancient Rome it is possible, as Dr. Lanciani points out in his preface, to approach them chronologically, topographically, or architecturally. Each of these methods presents certain advantages; but the author's objection to the architectural method applies equally to the chronological and topographical arrange-

ment. He says: "A method which may be useful for university work, and for a limited number of specialists, cannot also suit the student or the traveller who does not visit our ruins by regions, but according to the main centres of interest and of actual excavations." Dr. Lanciani, therefore, pursues a course of his own. In Book I. the fundamental lines of Roman topography are described. In Book II. the Palatine hill is dealt with. In Book III. a description of the Sacra Via is given, "from its origin near the Coliseum to its end near the Capitolium." The rest of the city is described in Book IV. by the regions of Augustus. For the benefit of students who wish to study the monuments in a different order, three indexes are given, "in the first of which they are named in topographical order, in the second according to their chronology, while in the third they are arranged (alphabetically) in architectural groups." As this book is not intended to be "a complete manual of Roman topography, but only a companion book for students and travellers, copious references are given to standard publications in each subject or part of a subject." In this way Dr. Lanciani has striven to meet the wants of all who are interested in the remains of Ancient Rome, with the result that he has compiled a book of interest for the traveller, and also for students who are eager for a more searching knowledge of the subjects touched upon. The book is copiously supplied with maps and illustrations, the latter "mostly original from drawings and photographs prepared expressly for this work."

*Renan's Life of Jesus.* Translated by William G. Hutchinson. (Walter Scott.)

THIS translation is opportune, and it has the advantage over existing ones of being made from a later French edition. Mr. Hutchinson supplies a useful Introduction, but we feel we cannot better occupy our space than by quoting his translation of Renan's well-known dedication, which tells so much about Renan, so much about the inception of his *Life of Jesus*:

"TO THE PURE SOUL OF MY SISTER HENRIETTE, WHO DIED AT BYBLOS, 24TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1861.—Do you remember, in the bosom of God, where you are now at rest, those long days at Ghazir, where, alone with you, I wrote these pages which drew their inspiration from the places we had visited together? Sitting silently by my side, you read over every page, and copied it as soon as written; at our feet stretched the sea, the villages, the ravines, and the mountains. When the overpowering light of day had given place to the unnumbered army of the stars, your thoughtful doubts led me back to the sublime object of our common thoughts. One day you told me that you would love this book, because it had been written with you, and also because it was after your own heart. If, at times, you feared for it the narrow judgments of the man of frivolous mind, you were always full of assurance that truly religious souls would end by finding pleasure in it. In the midst of these sweet meditations the Angel of Death smote both of us with his pinion; the slumber of fever seized us at the self-same hour; I awakened alone. Now you sleep in the land of Adonis, near holy Byblos and the sacred waters whither the

women of the ancient mysteries were wont to come and mingle their tears. O, my good genius, reveal to me whom you loved these verities that have kingship over death, that shield us from the dread of it, that almost makes us love it!"

Truly, if literature is tested by translation, this is literature.

*Poems Now First Collected.* By Edmund Clarence Stedman. (Gay & Bird.)

MR. STEDMAN is an American singer, whose verses have appeared in American magazines for a good many years. His poems make a pleasant sheaf, but they are so various in character that we can well believe the author found their arrangement, as he says, a difficult task. One group of these verses is evidently the offspring of a voyage in the Carib Seas. The magic of those waters have been truly felt, and are finely expressed, by Mr. Stedman. Sometimes we have a theme that Mr. Dobson might have made his own, as in "The Old Picture Dealer":

" Be the day's traffic more or less,  
Old Brian seeks his Leyden chair,  
Placed in the ante-room's recess,  
Our connoisseur's securest lair :  
Here, turning full the burner's rays,  
Holds long his treasure-trove in sight—  
Upon a painting sets his gaze  
Like some devoted eremite.

" The book-worms rummage as they will,  
Loud roars the wonted Broadway din,  
Life runs its backneyed round—but still  
One tireless boon can Brian win—  
Can picture in this modern time  
A life no more the world shall know,  
And dream of Beauty at her prime  
In Parma, with Correggio."

Several of the poems owe their origin to "commemorations"; and there are poems of last farewell to Walt Whitman and Bryant.

*Men-of-War Names: their Meaning and Origin.* By Captain Prince Louis of Battenberg, R.N. (Edward Stanford.)

MANY people must have wished to know more about the origin of the names of our battle-ships. This book will satisfy their curiosity to a limited extent. We say to a limited extent; because the author has nothing to tell us about the manner in which names for war-ships are selected, and by whom, at the Admiralty. He runs through the list of ship-names alphabetically. Where a mythological origin exists he gives it, as in the case of the *Ajax*, the *Egeria*, and the *Pyramus*. He gives us plenty of Lemprière, but there is a dearth of anecdote. Names of birds and beasts given to ships, such as the *Hyena*, the *Buzzard*, and the *Racoon* are dismissed thus: "RACOON (5th since about 1780)—*Procyonlotor*. A mammal of North America, allied to the bear family. This third-class cruiser was launched in 1887." This does not strike us as very enlightening, yet it is typical. It is surprising how few of our war vessels are the first of their name. Even the *Brisk* is the sixth of its name; and the *Swift* is the fifteenth since 1552. The oldest ship-name, however, is the *Royal Sovereign*, dating, as it does, from 1485. The book deals similarly with all the navies

of Europe and the United States, and so far as it goes, it is interesting and authoritative.

*A Book of Thoughts.* Compiled by Mary B. Curry. (Headley Brothers.)

MRS. CURRY has compiled a number of passages in prose and verse which were a source of refreshment to her father, John Bright. Mr. Bright's literary tastes were simple and sincere, if they did not always reveal great critical insight. But he encouraged the reading of Milton. Indeed, he made it a point to read *Paradise Lost* through once a year. The extracts given in prose and verse are very numerous, and include favourite Psalms. Judging by the number assigned to Milton, Longfellow, Lowell, Richard C. Trench, Whittier, and Adelaide Procter, we imagine these were John Bright's favourite poets. The volume is neatly produced, and provides a budget of choice and elevating reading.

*Illustrated New Testament.* (Nelsons.)

THIS TESTAMENT is well printed on excellent paper, and contains two hundred illustrations of Bible scenes and sites. The views are chiefly from photographs, and are incorporated in the text. To those who are not familiar with the scenery and architecture of the Holy Land, these illustrations supply an accurate background to the Gospel story.

*When all Men Starve.* By Charles Gleig. (John Lane.)

ANOTHER forecast of war and defeat for England, put forth, of course, as a warning. Such narratives always strike us as profoundly unconvincing, and this is no exception. Trouble in the Transvaal, and the vacillation of the Cabinet in dealing with Germany, which sends 20,000 troops to Delagon Bay, lead to a demand for the evacuation of Egypt by France and Russia; a naval war is precipitated; and the British Mediterranean Fleet is defeated. In the Strand a well-fed merchant is followed into an Aerated Bread shop by the unemployed, and is forced to stand on a table and read out the telegrams, whereupon the table is knocked from under him and the shop looted of its buns. Defeat and starvation go hand in hand, and the curtain falls on the burning of Buckingham Palace by the mob. Throughout, the author seems to have considered British patriotism and endurance to be negligible quantities.

*Ideals for Girls.* By the Rev. H. R. Haweis. (James Bowden.)

THIS book ought to go straight from Mr. Haweis to his girl readers, his "Untidy Girls," "Musical Girls," "Parochial Girls," "Engaged Girls," and "Brides." Reviewers and people who intercept it on the way will be provoked to smiles—one can hardly say why—but Mr. Haweis is so fatherly and so eager, and apparently so competent, to advise young girls how to shake and hang up their clothes, so that muslin will not be rumpled, or silk creased, or "the steels or bones in bodices bent or snapped." We live in wonderful times.

*The Homes and Haunts of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.* By George G. Napier, M.A., (Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons.)

AS a footnote to Lockhart's *Life* this luxurious volume, with its multitude of plates and engravings, will be heartily welcomed. The districts especially associated with Scott's life and work lie in the north-eastern part of Scotland. His movements are picturesquely traced from Edinburgh, "mine own romantic town," to the great house of Abbotsford, which Mr. Ruskin described as "perhaps the most incongruous pile that gentlemanly modernism ever designed," and of which Stanley declared dolefully that it was "a place to see once but never again." Mr. Napier has done his work thoroughly and adequately.

#### FORGET ME, DEATH!—O DEATH, FORGET ME NOT!

"FORGET me, Death, as from the meadow-land  
I rise with wayside song and bounding feet,  
While far below me fades the valley sweet  
And far above, the beckoning summits stand.  
Halt me not midway up, where the dim band  
Of those who watch below shall see us meet  
And mark Thee cut me down in the full heat  
Of my soul's mounting purpose. Stay Thy hand  
As I climb on, climb on—always more nigh  
The sacred heights where loveth Thou to be,  
My heart an eagle-brood of hopes that cry  
To those lone crags of storm and majesty.  
The eaglets gone, my heart their empty nest,  
Strike me, quick Death, into my warm deep rest!  
"O Death, forget me not, till I descend!  
Take not Thy place behind me, as with slow  
And slower steps, a waning shape, I go  
Toward the silent valley and the end.  
Lest midway down I turn with rage and send  
A curse at Thee, nay, seize thy blade and mow  
Myself down at Thy feet, and with the snow  
Of those deep years let my heart's summer blend.  
O Mighty One! How were it meet for Thee  
To set Thy foot upon the vanquished head,  
To wrest from Age a stingsless victory  
Whence Joy and Song and Love long, long have fled!  
Await me on the peaks of heavenward strife!  
Slay me, great Death, on the young peaks of Life!"

JAMES LANE ALLEN.  
*Mountains of West Virginia.*

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1897.  
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## NOTES AND NEWS.

THE following letter appeared in the Times this week:

SIR,—In this decadent month, after the great sea-serpent has usually risen once more to the surface of the Press—only, perhaps, to be choked in a far from unseasonable effort to emulate the digestion of other contributors by swallowing the gigantic gooseberry—no sensible man will feel and no honest man will affect surprise at the resurrection of a more ‘ridiculous monster’ than these. The notion of an English Academy is too seriously stupid for farce and too essentially vulgar for comedy. But that a man whose outspoken derision of the academic ideal or idea has stood on record for more than a few years, and given deep offence to nameless if high-minded censors by the frank expression of its contempt and the unqualified vehemence of its ridicule, should enjoy the unsolicited honour of nomination to a prominent place in so unimaginable a gathering—*colluviae literarum* it probably would turn out to be, if ever it slunk into shape and writhed into existence—well, it seems to me that the full and proper definition of so preposterous an impertinence must be left to others than the bearer of the name selected for the adulation of such insult.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

Mr. Swinburne, it is hardly necessary to state, was included in our suggested list of Academicians for his poetry, never for his prose.

MR. SWINBURNE is unfortunate. To be placed against one's will on a list of the first forty men of letters in the country is sufficiently annoying; but to be spoken of lightly in courts of law as a possible jurymen is worse. In a case heard this week an author claimed to be tried by a jury consisting of four fellow authors, four professors of Arabic, four publishers, and, “if possible, a Laureate.” This makes thirteen; but that apparently did not signify. When

asked what Laureate he would choose, the litigant replied—“Mr. Swinburne, perhaps.” The “perhaps” was wisely added.

THE week has been fruitful in invective. The lady who calls herself “Sarah Grand” ranges herself with Mr. Swinburne in the following letter to a critic in the *Daily Telegraph*:

“That you should insult Scott and Thackeray and Dickens with your approval pains me but little, since they will never hear of it; that you are so much cleverer than I am I must modestly accept your word for; that you strain yourself to be facetious and but prove yourself a dunce, I must attribute to your academic degree, and a course of the blighting wit of the common-room; that you should attack me with base misrepresentation I set down to some rag of chivalry that still clings to you; that you are of ancient lineage I am willing to admit, since your putting into my mouth words and sentiments which are not mine shows you infected with the blood of Ananias; that you should take yourself as a serious judge of art is a crime for which it is painful to think you must one day settle between you and your God; but that you should write yourself down an admirer of mine is the ugliest blow that my art has dealt me, and I take this opportunity to publicly apologise for it.”

Women when they incline to sarcasm are badly in need of a monitor borrowed from the inferior sex.

CONCERNING the completeness and honesty of FitzGerald's translation of Omar Khayyám, which lately have been called in question, we have received a letter from one of the first Persian scholars now living, from which we make an extract very much to the point. “Edward Fitz-Gerald,” he writes, “never intended his version of Omar Khayyám to be literal, and his readers will be inevitably disappointed if they expect to find in it an exact representation of the original. He frequently mixes up two or three quatrains into one; sometimes he puts in a line or two of his own; while the rest may be taken from the Persian. Thus the lines about

‘the seas that mourn

In flowing purple for their Lord forlorn,’ are not from Omar Khayyám *at all*, but from an apologue in Attar's “Bird-Parliament.” Fitz-Gerald followed Dryden, and even went beyond him in venturing to alter his original. I remember Dryden in his tenth Satire of Juvenal renders

‘Exitus ergo quis est, O gloria?’

by  
‘But what's his end, O charming Glory—say  
What rare fifth act to crown this huffing play?’  
This interpolated line is just in Fitz-Gerald's manner. Some quatrains are perfect as translations, others are really no translations at all.”

THE eternal low simmer in which the Junius question remains will be encouraged by the sale, to-day (Saturday), of a large number of letters addressed by Sir Philip Francis to various correspondents. But we are told that these letters afford no clue to the mystery of Junius. It is, perhaps, as well: a final fixing of the letters on any one of the persons to whom they are now

attributed would be heart-breaking to those Junius students who found themselves in the wrong. Hazlitt was almost killed by the news of Napoleon's fall, and there are gentlemen who would have to be sent home from their clubs in cabs if Francis were proved to be Junius—or if he proved not to be Junius.

THE chorus of praise which has greeted Mr. Walter Raleigh's book on *Style* is brusquely interrupted by the *Saturday Review*. Its critic thinks that Mr. Raleigh's work is

“the most intolerable piece of literary coxcombry which it has ever been our irritating ill-fortune to meet with. It may be described as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the preciousness of Pater and Stevenson. Every sentence seems to dance on a tight-rope.”

“Nonsense” and “twaddle” are epithets applied to the book.

MARK TWAIN'S new book, *More Tramps Abroad*, is published. The dedication runs:

THIS BOOK  
is affectionately inscribed to my young friend  
**HARRY ROGERS**  
with recognition  
of what he is, and apprehension of what he may become  
unless he form himself a little more closely  
upon the model of

THE AUTHOR

And there is a prefatory word concerning the Pudd'nhead maxims: “These wisdoms are for the luring of youth toward high moral altitudes. The author did not gather them from practice, but from observation. To be good is noble; but to show others how to be good is nobler and no trouble.” A curious departure is the printing on the back of the title-page of the name and address of the lady who typed the original MS.

THE latest modern author to achieve the distinction of a popular sixpenny edition of a novel is Mr. Clark Russell, whose *Wreck of the “Grosvener”* has just been issued in that form by Messrs. Sampson Low & Co. It is by many considered his best story, and it should widen his popularity considerably. Will not the same publishers try the effect of one of Mr. William Black's romances in this form? He is a charming writer, who, all undeservedly, seems to have fallen into neglect.

In a paragraph last week concerning illustrations for children we deplored the scarcity of artists whose leading ambition is to please the child; to make him, we said, “laugh or shout, or grow big-eyed with wonder or delight.” Since writing these words the work of an artist who to some extent fulfils these conditions has been published. It now lies before us—*Jumbles*, written and illustrated by Mr. Lewis Baumer (C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd.). Mr. Baumer is a clever and vigorous draughtsman, with a true gift of irresponsible fun—of nonsense, in fact—which he is able to express both with pencil and with pen. His verses are crisp and simple, and in no way self-conscious. They hardly bear quoting

apart from the picture, but here is one of the shortest :

"A silly sort of person went  
And sat up in a tree;  
'What's good enough for birds,' he said,  
'Is good enough for me.'

The verses, in short, serve to introduce the picture, and then their work is done. The pictures themselves, some in colours and some in monotint, are merry and sufficient. They teem with drollery of the requisite obvious variety. There is a scene of two lady pigs on bicycles, which may become a nursery classic. But all Mr. Baumer's pigs are a delight. He loves little pigs with a love not exceeded by Charles Lamb.

We wonder that none of our minor poets, who, alas! seem to shirk concrete themes, have not found a subject in the recent City fire. Perhaps they will yet be inspired by the spectacle of the flames licking the church in which Milton sleeps. Meanwhile, we must be content with the following lines which an old woman was heard chanting in a street in Hackney last Tuesday :

"Good people, I'se a widder lone,  
To you my woes I'll tell,  
Though I 'umble ham an' werry pore,  
I'se most re-spect-i-bel.  
"But sudden I'se thrown hout on work,  
An' hincome lost hentire.  
I'se a pore, burned hout charwoman,  
Along hof the City fire.  
"I worked hin a City horfice long,  
None toiled as 'ard as me,  
But the burnin' flames took away the bread  
Hof me an' my childring three.  
"Then 'elp a burned hout charwoman  
To feed 'er familee,  
Wot's ruined by the cruel City fire  
An' struck with poverty."

The *Evening News*, which reports the incident, is scornful of the poor woman because a few weeks ago she was singing her woes as a "washed-out hop-picker." But surely such lyrical resource is to be encouraged.

THE REV. George Paton, of Ramsey, Isle of Man, writes thus to a Manx paper : "I do not doubt that there will be more than one memorial to the memory of our greatest Manxman, the Rev. T. E. Brown, but we are very anxious that one should be placed here, in the town to which he was greatly attached, and in the church in which he was accustomed to worship. It is proposed that the memorial take the form of a stained glass window, in the only remaining unfilled light on the ground floor of St. Paul's." Mr. Paton expresses himself ready to receive subscriptions.

As specimens of unsuitable illustrations we have rarely seen anything to surpass Mr. Byam Shaw's drawings to accompany a selection from Browning's poems which Messrs. Bell & Sons have just published. The artist is Mr. Byam Shaw, and Dr. Garnett in his introduction says : "The accompanying illustrations, it is believed, will commend themselves to all as the production of an artist who has imbibed the spirit of Browning, and proved himself com-

petent to reproduce imaginative thought as visible form, with no loss of vigour or abatement of the sense of reality."

If Dr. Garnett had not saved himself by writing "it is believed," our opinion of him as an art critic would decrease. Mr. Shaw has certainly permitted no abatement of reality. He spares us nothing. The plate to "The Last Ride Together" shows us a young squire and the vicar's daughter in a squashed down sailor hat, each on a sorry nag. To turn from the picture to the poetry is ludicrous :

"My mistress bent that brow of hers,  
Those deep, dark eyes where pride demurs  
When pity would be softening through"—  
and so on. In "The Grammarian's Funeral" we are offered the coffin itself ; Pippa turns out to be an English maiden with a vacuous face ; the Lost Mistress, the same girl, or just such another, standing by the fire, while her lover, who more than a little resembles Mr. Anthony Hope in faultless evening dress, sulks in the foreground. Altogether, a less desirable work we have rarely handled.

WHILE on the subject of illustrations we should like to give a word of praise to the graceful and winsome drawings of infants which figure in the modest little calendar for 1898 just published by Mr. George Allen. The artist, Miss Nellie Benson, has a clean line, a pleasing sense of form, and much charm.

THE current issue of the *Tablet* contains the following communication from a correspondent :

"These parallel passages, taken from the columns of the *Illustrated London News* at a twelvemonth's interval, are, I venture to think, worth reproducing as an object-lesson of the value (or otherwise) of a certain class of contemporary literary criticism :

"(October, 1896.)      "(November 13, 1897.)

"It is more or less authoritatively announced that the Very Rev. F. A. Gasquet is shortly to be raised to the purple. . . . Dr. Gasquet is one of the most able and distinguished of Roman Catholic writers. His researches and his learning have done more to clear up the difficult historical problems that circle around the suppression of the monasteries than those, probably, of any living writer. His ability has been widely recognised in quarters by no means friendly to the position of the Roman Catholic Church in England."

MR. KARSLAKE is also showing a novelty in the form of illustrated books coloured by hand. In Miss Gloria Cardew, a young and clever lady, he has found a colourist capable of doing charming work in this direction. We have seen a copy of Messrs. Bell & Son's recently published edition of Keats, in which Mr. Anning Bell's line illustrations have been embellished by Miss Cardew with delicate tints. The effect is delightful. In these days, when the coloured print is so popular, we should not be surprised to find hand-coloured book illustrations rise into similar favour.

A GLADSTONE Birthday Book was inevitable. It is now announced by Messrs. Marcus Ward & Co. Each day of the year will be accompanied by a quotation from Mr. Gladstone's writings or speeches. Mr. G. Barnett Smith will supply an introduction, although an introduction to Mr. Gladstone seems a little unnecessary. We trust that the selections are being made with care. The last thing, for example, that one wants to read on the First of May is a pronouncement on Home Rule.

AT the same time comes the "Ian Maclaren Calendar" for 1898 (Hodder & Stoughton). Ian Maclaren is a Scotch writer from whose books three hundred and sixty-five lines, cruelly incomplete and often almost meaningless, or, at any rate, unco' ordinar' (as he would say), have been wrench'd to accompany the dates. As a specimen of the result attained, we will give the texts for the week of 1898, corresponding to the week now before us :

Nov. 26 Sat.	The dog rose and laid his head on Drumsheugh's hand . . .
" 27 Sun.	For the first time a halo rests on gentleness, patience, kindness and sanctity . . .
" 28 Mon.	Weel dune, Jess. Weel dune, auld mare . . .
" 29 Tues.	It seemed, after our loss, as if life could never regain its buoyancy . . .
" 30 Wed.	The wind came in gusts, roaring in the chimney . . .
Dec. 1 Thurs.	A rough December night . . .
" 2 Fri.	Many were the myths that gathered round that coat.

They hardly seem needful, these extracts. To choose definitions from a dictionary would be more illuminating.

CONNOISSEURS of book-binding cannot do better than inspect the exhibition of Artistic Book-binding by Women which has been organised by Mr. Karslake in the Charing Cross-road. Mr. Karslake's attention was attracted to the exhibits of book-binding by women at the Victoria Era Exhibition ; and with considerable enterprise he has again collected those exhibits at his book-shop in the above thoroughfare. The bindings shown are mostly in embossed leather, and they are the unfettered and artistic work of the hand, executed by gentlewomen in Edinburgh, Chiswick, Kirby Lonsdale, and other places.

### AMERICAN AND ENGLISH CRITICISM.

THERE are few literary questions that have been debated with so much persistence as the definition and the province of true criticism. Even if the meaning of criticism be limited to a decision on the value or worthlessness of current literary productions, it becomes almost impossible to decide between the relative merits of the criticism enjoyed by writers of different nationalities. For further questions will inevitably arise as to the superiority of Form over Matter, as to the suitability of various languages as vehicles of thought.

But, after thus posing my little variation of the problem, "What is Truth?" I shall be following ancient precedent if I wait not for an answer. For, as between the United States and England, the question is considerably simplified by a presumed identity of language, and by the fact that criticism at the present day in America is to all intents and purposes non-existent. In England we can undoubtedly find more than twelve good men and true who may be depended upon for an impartial verdict in accordance with the facts; and even if the "summing up" take several pages of valuable space in the ACADEMY, it produces specimens of broad-minded toleration not unworthy the best examples of the Bench; but, whatever judges bless or ban us on this side, I am not able to discover one upon the other—no, not in Boston—who can either sentence an American literary criminal to death or even discharge him without a stain upon his character.

I have no desire in this place either to compare the text of English and American opinions on the same book, or even to compare the various organs which on either side of the Atlantic pose as the arbiters of literary taste. If I name one, it will be to name no more; but it is impossible to avoid in this connexion the remembrances of the good work in the pages of the *Nation* towards erecting some standard of intelligent and independent judgment which may influence American literature. But the example stands almost alone. For the American public prefers facts to any opinion save its own. It would be a fair statement to say that they like to read first newspapers, then magazines, and lastly books. Yet there is no doubt that though what stands there for criticism is very widely scattered, often very desultory, our Transatlantic readers give a good book a very fair chance of success. English authors have long ago realised that the public who will buy English books and read them has been more than tripled in the last quarter of a century. Piracies that were formerly of merely sentimental interest have now developed into serious questions of copyright and of pecuniary loss. It was America that sold *Trilby*, which is a typical example. For it showed very clearly that people to whom such phrases as the *dernier cri* or *fin de siècle* are treasured watchwords have, in reality, many generations to live through before they reach the modernity of our outworn creeds. To them the *Vie de Bohème* was unknown; the Quartier Latin was an undiscovered

country. I speak, of course, of the nation as a whole, for it is upon a far larger public than the merely literary that such a success as was *Trilby's* must depend. In that public one of the characteristics of the reader is to prefer his own judgment to that of any extraneous authority. It is, therefore, possible for a writer, in many cases, to appeal independently to his audience without any fear that they will be prejudiced by a cacophony of "general articles," or by the too easily accepted verdict of a few. After a recent visit to New York I asked Mr. W. D. Howells what he thought upon this very subject. "We have no one, I believe," he replied, "whose good opinion (like that of Mr. Gladstone with you) would make the future of a book. Lowell's opinion, in his closing years, would have done more in that way than any other." And, indeed, if any individual does influence the American public he neither obtains acknowledgment nor dares confession. For Lowell is dead. Curtis is dead. Others who followed less conspicuously in their footsteps have died, died from sheer inanition. No one reads them. The critic is unable, like the Pelican of the story, to nourish a family with the blood of his own breast. He cannot sustain life by crying in the wilderness.

The problem is still unsolved of how to bring any art, or criticism of art, into touch with the intellectual needs and aspirations of that great democracy to which an American critic must vainly speak. Other countries have passed through such phases as the aristocratic energy of Greece, the monarchic centralisation of France, the national enthusiasm of Elizabethan England. Even the Republic of the United States, in the earlier years of the new Constitution, before ancestral influences had died away, showed full of possibilities. The worn-out methods of European classicism, invigorated by the birth of a new nation, seemed likely to produce a literature that should reflect the strength and youth of independent growths expanding on a virgin soil. But the "innate malignity of material things" has triumphed. The free democracy, which older nations have attained only through martyrdoms of oppression, was not thus to be created, full-fledged and perfect, from the theory of the Fathers of the Republic. Nay, these very efforts to ensure the political freedom of their people have but resulted (as we have seen so recently) in a greater thralldom to corruption, in far worse forms of despotism, than are known in countries which by nominal monarchy have achieved a real democracy. In literature and criticism Americans are suffering in the same way; because the problem of development has been offered to them in an unnatural form. Huge populations have sprung up, trained chiefly to money-making, spread over a vast area of country or aggregated in the mushroom growth of unformed cities. The idea of nationality, though blatantly proclaimed, has little real existence in the *colluvies omnium gentium* produced by constant immigration. This complex mass of hurrying, keenly trafficking personalities, bound together only by a superficial education in the elements of knowledge, is confronted by

an equally heterogeneous array of cosmopolitan men of letters, whose production is itself too hasty, whose audience have no time or care to take a trained opinion on the work presented. The voice of the leisurely and cultured critic has been drowned in the clamour of the stockbroker. He has not cared to speak again.

The "literary output" of Chicago for one week has just been chronicled by a correspondent. I need not reproduce the list. *Travels in Spain* (by a lady), *Theories of Life and Education* (by a bishop), *Studies in French Criticism* (by another lady), a volume on *Menticulture* (sic), and a monograph on *Marengo*, these are a few of the productions which this central city of the West is turning out so rapidly. And I have mentioned neither poetry nor fiction. But the mere record serves as a reminder of another differentiating phase of American intellectual life. That life has no centre, no metropolis of culture or of critical authority, which can claim to speak to the whole body of its citizens. For considerations of space affect the whole question. The greatest critic (whoever he may be) of the North Atlantic seaboard has but a slight chance of influencing Chicago, or even of arresting the attention of the West. This is one reason why a national school of literature cannot as yet be said to exist in the United States. Walt Whitman pointed out long ago the direction which such national endeavours might take. And we may well believe that the great Democracy ought to produce both a literature and a criticism differing in essential points from those of classical antiquity and romantic feudalism. Freed from the fetters of scholastic tradition, delivered both from pedantry and the inevitable reaction, the American author has a share in all that modern science can suggest or new political conceptions promise. He can get very near to nature and to truth. The very industries that surround him can reveal a store of beauty that it is the special mission of a democratic art to reproduce. But as a general rule he will have none of these things. The fine material that lies ready to his hand he will persist in dressing up in uncouth and incongruous trappings. Eager to produce, restive under authority, he proclaims aloud a spurious freedom that he has lost alike in literature and in citizenship. He must work out his own salvation; and in the process some school of criticism must inevitably arise that shall point him in the right path.

In the meantime, a defenceless American public is bombarded with trash of every kind. If, indeed, as the best of our own prophets has said, we are all living under the "tyranny of the novel," then English readers may at least be thankful for the cloud of literary sentinels who keep outside the lines all those who have not some semblance of credentials to admission. In a half-educated and still undeveloped country that portion of the philosophy of life which has come under the observation of the average reader is but the smallest fraction of the seductive whole laid light-heartedly before him by "the omniscient, omnipresent novelist." While a credulous public accepts as gospel all that is given it under the

guise of "literature," there is very little chance that writers will improve their methods. The American critic is just now as necessary for the protection of the public as for the education of the author. The standard of excellence, in each case, needs far more rigorous application.

Mr. Howells's reference to Mr. Gladstone's influence in this country was no doubt suggested by the well-known instance of *Robert Elsmere*. But the change has come. We scarcely needed Sir Herbert Maxwell's letter to remind us that the *magni nominis umbra* has vanished, in this case at least. It only remains to ask whether any other individual expression of opinion can be regarded as a valuable element in English criticism. If no such personal authority exists at the present day in America, may it not be that a public which is troubled by no criticism at all is in better case than one which absorbs without reflection the judgment of its temporary favourites? The actual quantity of thoroughly sound criticism in England is now of such proportions, whether from the mere increase of "subject-matter" or from other reasons, that I hardly venture to suggest the danger of its becoming too authoritative. Not every critic is so receptive, so open-minded in considering fresh endeavour, as is necessary for continuous growth. If the follower of the old classical school would take no denial of his right to judge, still less could his successor of the romantic type divest himself of those subjective qualities which affected even the phrasing of his verdict. Among the best equipped of critics the element of personal taste in literature must remain inexplicable and irreducible. But the reaction may carry us too far. The modern scientific school which studies things in their historical connexions, and traces an organic development in literature analogous to that in the animal kingdom, seems more likely to provide us with handy guides to knowledge than with inspiration to the best creative work. It may be true, as De Quincey pointed out, that "authors have always been a dangerous class for any language." And we are well aware that the guardians of our national taste should be critical rather than creative. But is there not some slight risk that the guardianship is being rather overdone?

THEODORE COOK.

#### THE CASE FOR LATIN VERSES.

EVERY schoolmaster knows that the last quarter of a century has witnessed a strong reaction against the teaching of Latin verse. The demands of the science master, the mathematical master, the French master, and the German master, not to mention the requirements of the games' master, have made such inroads upon the time-table that a bare margin is left for the use of the classical master. A utilitarian age has regarded verse-making as merely an elegant way of wasting time; and whereas within the memory of living Etonians versification was practically the only test of scholarship,

to-day an Oxford man may win his First in classical "Mods" and his First in "Greats" without writing a single hexameter. It is, of course, unquestionable that the highest kind of scholarship, such as that of Prof. Jebb, is impossible without skill in the metres of Greece and Rome. This you may see in the case of the German commentators, who, not having learned to write verses at school, come not infrequently to dire grief when they try to emend the ancient poets. But it is not likely, it is not even desirable, that the majority of public school boys will grow up into commentators. The question which the modern headmaster has to decide is whether the boy who is destined for the Army, the Navy, the Church, or the Bar will be better fitted for his profession by a knowledge—and, as a rule, a very limited knowledge—of Latin verse writing. And this is a question which the Headmaster of Haileybury sets himself to answer frankly and fully in the carefully reasoned little book which he calls *Are We to go on with Latin Verses?* (Longmans, Green & Co.)

Mr. Lyttelton is quite ready to admit that the average schoolboy gets but a very little way towards the writing of original Latin verses. Indeed, he seldom gets much beyond the stage at which he is able to select from a certain number of possible words which he has in front of him sufficient words to dovetail into a passable rendering in hexameter or pentameter of an English line. Now the ordinary objection to the teaching of Latin verses is that not one boy in a hundred is ever taught to write Latin verses which would not set a scholar's teeth on edge. Mr. Lyttelton maintains that even in its elementary stages the study has special advantages over all other studies. Assuming, as he has every right to assume—that the study of Latin is of educational value, he maintains that the making of verses helps a boy to increase his vocabulary easily and almost unconsciously. The search for synonyms and the use of words with the ulterior object of clamping a verse must be a pleasanter way of getting a vocabulary than the learning of a page of the dictionary. Secondly, it is impossible to appreciate the "harmonies of the Latin Muse" without a knowledge of the metres in which that Muse sang. This point may, we think, be dismissed with the reflection that not one schoolboy in a hundred ever attains any appreciation of Virgil or Horace. "Automatic punishment of inaccuracy" is a third advantage of this scholastic pursuit. The boy who, writing Latin prose, translated "that dying soldier" by "ut infectus milites" involved his master in a very lengthy explanation. If he had had to put the same into a Latin verse, his efforts at dovetailing that preposterous combination of words would have failed, and the failure would have pointed to his mistake. On the other hand, most grown-up schoolboys will recall occasions when they strained the laws of grammar to meet those of rhythm, and that not infrequently the most ungrammatical lines scanned the best.

But these arguments have been heard again and again. Mr. Lyttelton bases his verdict in favour of Latin verses rather

upon the fact that they are more stimulating to the schoolboy than any other study. When a boy has written an English essay, or a French exercise, or a piece of Latin prose he cannot see with his own eyes, and at once, that he has done something as it ought to be done. But when he has pieced his pentameter together, and sees that it is true and taut, he feels the satisfaction of the desire for visible achievement. "To compare small things with great," writes Mr. Lyttelton, with the humour of a scholar who is also a cricketer, "the perfecting of a pentameter is, in this one respect only, not wholly unlike the hitting of a half-volley to leg." Mr. Lyttelton knows as much as most men of the schoolboy in the class-room and in the cricket field. And if the schoolboy likes perfecting pentameters as well as placing a loose ball over the ropes, by all means let him perfect them. The more especially as they undoubtedly teach him Latin.

#### PARIS LETTER.

(From our French Correspondent.)

M. ANDRÉ CHEVRIERON'S book on dead lands—Thebes and Judea—contains some very brilliant pages among quantities of very dull ones. There is not a lively passage in the whole volume, hardly a sketch or a figure, if we except the solitary instance of the hotel-keeper of Jaffa who, in laying the table and beating off the flies with his napkin, offered his guests one of his own books, a volume entitled *Pilules Bibliques*. There were 365 pills to be taken daily for an entire year, and if the patients refrain "from light reading, such as novels, &c., during the course of treatment," they are promised perfect moral health; cordial relations with one's neighbours are re-established, the intelligence is illumined, and the appetite for the Word of God restored. The pills consisted of 365 verses from the Bible, and the innkeeper was a German Protestant.

This is an unusual break in somewhat heavy and laboured descriptive writing. M. Chevrieron has systematically modelled himself, as an observer of lands and races, on his illustrious uncle, M. Taine; only he accentuates the defects of his model without brightening these by Taine's vivacity and vigour of style, which more than make amends. M. Chevrieron can be extremely picturesque, and he often reaches really beautiful effects of colour and form. But his psychology is in excessive evidence. He describes at a ruthless length, and crowded details, instead of painting a clear picture on the mind, confront the reader with a hopeless confusion of images and suggestions. The style lacks delicacy of touch, vividness of stroke, clearness of form, and the matter is treated from too dull and intellectual a point of view. To the general reader it presents too much of the features of a book of research, while this in turn is belied by its air of gathered impressions. Here, for instance, is a distinct echo of Taine in his *Carnets de Voyage*:

"That first evening was very fine: we had

left the region of big grey clouds, the great patches of autumn that the Mediterranean had blown as far as south of the Delta, and we had discovered the happy regions—a stirless world, where all in the pure light was enchanted. The arid chain eastward girdled the distant plain; it was a vague rose band scarce brushed with bluish shadows, and of such lightness that it did not even seem of vapour, but a simple play of light round the green terrestrial world, like certain mysterious rays of *aurora borealis* in the shadow of the evening."

These sort of descriptions abound, and are sometimes so prolonged that their effect is diminished. But in the chapters on Judea, M. Chevillon has said some things remarkably true and deep. Speaking of the disillusion of Jerusalem, he writes :

"The true Christmas, the true Holy Family, was dreamed of in Europe, in the Middle Ages, by monks and tender-hearted peasants: across the fields and through flowery woods, over a green country, a blue and radiant night, like those of our June, a marvellous star followed by mysterious kings, mailed like knights, laden with jewels, and coming one knows not whither, walking through the wheat by river meads towards the straw cradle where, not far from the sheep, in its dawn the little Child slept under the care of the good carpenter, beneath the profound and suave glance of a white and saintly Mary."

The Christian faith, he tells us, is nowhere so poor, so venal, so insincere as at Jerusalem, its cradle. The missionaries aver that they have to pay and feed their pupils to keep them in the church. "We keep them Christian through the mouth." Christianity, M. Chevillon says, lies elsewhere. The Jews and the Arabs he describes as essentially alike, self-concentrated, poor from without. They possess the same inferiority of visual faculty, the same incapacity to get outside of self, to take the measure of things, the same predominance in lyrical and personal poetry. Neither race perceives the plastic or coloured details of reality. Their images in prose and poetry paint a moral condition. Form disappears, and the style of their writers is fierce and spasmodic, instead of flexible, wavering, delicate and subtle. Shades and complexities of meaning are unknown to both, while the brusque and jerky interpretation of strong and simple emotions of primitive feelings has all the shudder of life.

M. Pierre Loti forms a fine contrast with M. Chevillon as a descriptive writer. Everything that the one is not the other is—and the reverse. Both address us simultaneously with their impressions of "far, fair, foreign lands." Only, alas! Loti is far from at his best. Nothing more thin and fugitive than these collected papers: "Figures et choses qui passaient." He has done the Basque country so beautifully in his enchanting novel *Ramuntcho* that one asks oneself in dismay why he should think fit to come forward now with a half-dozen worthless articles on the subject. And really the wizard is becoming too intolerably sentimental for a patient hearing. It has been said that sentimentality kills sentiment. This last dose of Loti-ism almost kills pity in us, so emasculate and long-drawn-out is the enervating pity of Pierre Loti. He weeps

over the death of children in a way to make one relish the contrary disposition of Herod. His attitude throughout this volume is that of the walrus who spoke "holding his pocket handkerchief before his streaming eyes."

We are very sorry for the untimely death of two-year-old little Roger, his servant's child, and are prepared to believe he was the blonde little angel Loti complacently describes him with the tears rolling down his cheeks; but when Loti has wept separately over the baby's curls, and eyes, and smile, and lisp, and his little pink gown, and then begins to weep anew over the thought of his embroidered cravat that was generally crooked, good heavens! we have had enough both of Loti and the baby. Could a sane man write more absurd stuff than this concluding pathetic cry: "Mon Dieu, behold my heart torn anew, so that I must weep again in thinking of that little cravat with the bow behind falling on the back of that pink gown!" Ah! Monsieur Loti, what a safe and pleasant thing is the vice of humour. It would save you from the dangerous pitfalls of your too tremulous sensibilities.

The *Mur d'en face*, however, reaches real pathos, and here we have the old touch of the charmer—the delicate, soft, enchanting touch that nobody alive possesses but Loti. In such moments he seems to get to the very heart of sadness—to reveal its full, unfathomable glance, the pathos of its tearlessness, its eternal, unbroken silence. This slight little sketch is the best of the collection, but most readers will prefer the pages on the war in Annam. But he lacks all grasp of his subject here. He delicately paints the surprise and gratitude of the Chinese wounded when their conquerors give them to drink instead of torturing them, and he feels finely for them.

H. L.

#### NEW BOOKS.

*L'Alliance Autrichienne.* Duc de Broglie.  
*Poèmes.* Stuart Mersil.

#### DID SHAKESPEARE WRITE FOR POSTERITY?

##### A NEW HYPOTHESIS.

It is a commonly received opinion that after his retirement to Stratford-on-Avon Shakespeare gave no thought to the MSS. that he had left in the hands of the players, but treated them as so much waste paper, unworthy of preservation. As this implies an extraordinary lack of judgment on the part of the greatest poet, dramatist, and philosopher that the world has known, it is surprising that the meagre facts of the case should have been so little scrutinised by Halliwell-Phillipps, Karl Elze, and other latter-day commentators, because, it seems to me they point to a conclusion diametrically opposite to the one generally entertained. In support of the hypothesis of Shakespeare's indifference to the fate of his plays—for the quarto publications, besides being very

incomplete, were probably piratical, or at least unauthorised—there is but one single circumstance to allege—an important circumstance, no doubt—namely, that after his retirement, although nearly four years elapsed before his death, he did not, in fact, collect his papers and give them to the world in an authentic form. This omission may, of course, have been intentional; but in the absence of direct proof one way or the other, we can only infer why the greatest name in literature was in danger of being lost to us, and I propose to show that, inference for inference, it is more likely that Shakespeare was prevented from editing his plays, than that he wished them consigned to oblivion. Even in those remote days, when reading was the luxury of the few, men had "posterity" before their eyes. It was to posterity, it will be remembered, that Bacon (Shakespeare's greatest literary contemporary) entrusted the vindication of his character. Was posterity ever present to Shakespeare's mind? Once this question is asked, not one circumstance (as in the case of the negative proposition) but a multitude of circumstances point to an affirmative answer.

First, as regards the literary quality of his work. It is inconceivable that a man of Shakespeare's judgment should have been blind to his own merits in comparison with those of his contemporaries, and of the classic writers. His excellence was freely acknowledged in his own day—it is a mistake to suppose that it was not. Greene's spiteful reference, no less than Ben Jonson's flattering ode, attests it. Several contemporary poets praise Shakespeare, and, as early as 1600, the compilers of anthologies began to make free with his works. *England's Parnassus*, *The Garden of the Muses*, *England's Helicon*, and *The Wits' Treasury*, of that period, all accord a prominent place to Shakespeare. The compiler of the last-named, one Meres, "Master of Arts in both Universities," goes so far as to say that the "sweet-wittie soul of Ovid lives in the mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare." If Shakespeare was not alive to his own genius, therefore, it was not for want of hearing it proclaimed. Besides, the success of his plays alone must have sufficed to convince him of the fact.

Secondly, there is very strong evidence in the plays themselves that they were written not solely with an eye to the two or three hours' traffic of the stage, which then, as now, was *réglementaire*. The probability is that Shakespeare had a reading public in his mind. In none of the plays is there anything which "dates"—any mention of a contemporary statesman, soldier, sailor, poet, priest, man of science, nobleman, king, or queen. Yet those were the days of great deeds by land and sea; the old faith and the new were striving for mastery, and science was changing men's conception of the universe. Shakespeare treated only of the stable facts of history and the enduring passions of men. The absence from his plays of any reference to his intellectual, moral, or political surroundings is very striking. Things could not have been better ordered in works designed to be "for all time." On the other hand, for

the mere catch-penny purposes with which Shakespeare has been credited even by the most reverent of his critics, contemporary allusions would have been valuable, and there are plenty of them in the literature of the period.

A more important consideration still, from our present point of view, is the length of the plays. It is notorious that the great tragedies and many of the comedies have to be cut down by one-half or two-thirds in order to be brought within the compass of a three hours' performance. Of course, modern *mise-en-scène* and the division of the play into acts, prolong the action a good deal beyond what the author may have intended. Whether any break was made in the course of the play in Shakespeare's time we do not know; but, certainly, his stage managers were not hampered with movable scenery. Still, all due allowance being made on this score, and also for a more rapid delivery than modern actors cultivate, the plays, almost without exception, are far too long for the stage. It is impossible to read "Hamlet" through in such a manner as to be intelligible to an audience in less than five hours; most of the other plays require four hours or four and a quarter, and that at a faster rate of delivery than, I think, any body of actors taking their cues from each other could adopt. With pauses such as probably were made even in the days of no scenery, the time occupied in the representation of a Shakespearean play in its entirety could not in the majority of cases have been less than five hours. The presumption, consequently, is that Shakespeare treated his subject with all the fulness of detail that suggested itself to his mind at the time of writing without regard to the technical requirements of acting. This is the more probable that many long passages consist of philosophical disquisitions or poetry that could not be regarded as dramatic or indispensable to the subject. Is it conceivable that Shakespeare, the practical dramatist, wrote these with no other object than that they should be cut and chopped about at the discretion of an ignorant stage-manager?

The third set of considerations bearing upon this question appear to me the weightiest of all. The preface of Hemynge and Condell, who printed the plays in the first folio edition, seven years after Shakespeare's death, contains the following :

"It has been a thing, we confess, worthy to have been wished that the author himself had lived to have set forth and overseen his own writings; but since it hath been ordained otherwise, and he by death departed from that right," &c.

These words are not at variance with the hypothesis that Shakespeare had intended to publish his collected works. Rather they point to such a purpose; and Hemynge and Condell, be it remembered, were the poet's friends, and likely to be acquainted with his intentions. Why, then, did Shakespeare neglect the duty of collecting and publishing his works? Here we arrive at the crucial point. The common belief (started by Rowe, his first biographer, who wrote 100 years after Shakespeare's death) is that the poet retired to Stratford on a

competence to spend the latter portion of his life "in ease and the conversation of his friends the gentlemen of the neighbourhood." I venture to think the actual circumstances were very different. Shakespeare suddenly ceased work at the age of forty-eight. A few months previously he bought a dwelling-house in Blackfriars, presumably with the intention of living there. But towards the close of the year 1613 his plans were changed, and he buried himself alive in the remote, dull, unattractive town of Stratford. To suppose that he sought the society of the "gentlemen of the neighbourhood," with whom he could have had nothing in common, in preference to the merry gatherings in London in which Ben Jonson and other wits of the time took part, is absurd. Nor does the literary mind willingly cease producing at forty-eight. The most likely cause of Shakespeare's early and sudden withdrawal from the scene of his labours and literary interests was ill-health. He must have wished to be at home and to be nursed by his wife.

This is my assumption, and it will be found to be in sinister accord with the known facts. Shakespeare did not belong to a healthy stock. He was one of a family of eight, of whom seven, including himself, attained an average age of only twenty-one years, the one long-lived member being his sister Joan. With all the insanitary conditions of life in those days, this is an exceptionally low average, only explicable on the assumption that Shakespeare, like so many men of genius, sprang from a stock physically unsound. As to the cause of his death the only information extant is the famous entry in the diary of the Rev. John Ward, of Stratford, who wrote in 1663 : "Shakespeare, Drayton, and Ben Jonson had a merrie meeting, and it seems drank too hard, for Shakespeare died of a feavour there contracted." Strange to say, this obviously spiteful piece of gossip has been accepted by all the biographers down to the present time. Medical science, however, rejects it. There is no fever properly so called which can be contracted by drinking, and Shakespeare's death, moreover, occurred two and a half months after the "merrie meeting." Halliwell-Phillipps supposes the fever to have been typhus or typhoid; but in order to sustain this hypothesis he is obliged to tamper with the date of the signing of the poet's will on his deathbed. The dangerous seizure which caused the draft will to be signed, as it had stood for months in the lawyer's hand, took place on March 25, the original word January being struck out and March written in. But the patient did not die for four weeks and a day, which is not the usual course of typhus or typhoid fever; and for Halliwell-Phillipps's suggestion that the melancholy gathering at New Place happened later than the 25th of March, the day of the month in the draft will being "left unchanged by an oversight," there is no warrant whatever.

The fever hypothesis being inadmissible, of what, then, did Shakespeare die? There are facts from which a plausible inference on this point may be drawn. According to Hemynge and Condell the poet must in his prime have written with great ease, since

there was "scarcely a blot" in his papers. But all his unquestionable signatures that remain are shaky enough to denote some sort of paralysis. The early Florio signature, authentic or not, is free from this defect, but in the signature appended to the lease in 1613 the shakiness of the hand is evident; in the signatures to the will a month before his death it is such that the name is hardly legible. Another fact demonstrating the probability of some affection of the nervous system is that in dictating the draft will drawn up by his lawyer in January, 1616, Shakespeare failed to remember the Christian name of his nephew Thomas Hart, which accordingly remains blank to this day—a veritable oversight this! And failure of memory, together with unsteadiness of the hand, is, I need not add, the frequent precursor of a fatal paralytic or apoplectic attack. So far from passing the three and a half years of his retirement in pleasant intercourse with "the gentlemen of the neighbourhood" of Stratford therefore, Shakespeare, I feel justified in inferring, was a martyr to ill-health, the victim of some sort of nervous complaint which betrayed itself in his handwriting before his departure from London. If so, the amazing hypothesis that he was so indifferent to the "heirs of his invention" that he did not care to pass them on to posterity no longer holds water. That it should ever have found a moment's credence, indeed, is remarkable. How much more natural to suppose, in accordance with the above interpretation of the facts, that the same cause which impelled Shakespeare to throw down his pen at the early age of forty-eight prevented him from taking it up in his retirement! And how much more creditable to his judgment!

J. F. NISBET.

## THE BOOK MARKET.

### DICKENS AND THACKERAY.

#### SALES AND EDITIONS.

FOLLOWING our recent inquiry into the present sales of the *Waverley* Novels, and into the merits of the various editions now before the public, we have issued similar inquiries respecting the novels of Dickens and Thackeray. The following is the result of our investigation. A large London bookseller writes :

"We have no hesitation in saying that, in our experience, Dickens keeps his place at the head of the list of authors living or dead, although Thackeray and Scott come close enough to be associated with him. The trio stand quite alone. Among the editions of Dickens now available the preference must be given to the 'Gadshill' edition, now in course of publication. It is everything that could be desired in point of paper, print, illustrations, binding, and price, and it is making its way. Next to this we have the 'Crown,' which is the best popular edition published. The sales, however, are not confined to these two, as the 'Half-crown' edition has a large and increasing popularity; while even the 'One Shilling' edition is selling by hundreds.

"Of the older editions, the 'Household,' the 'Charles Dickens,' the 'Popular Library,' and the 'Illustrated Library' have all had to give way to more modern and better 'got-up' books. The very latest wonder is the set complete, well bound in cloth, for one guinea.

Thackeray is not so fortunate. The handsomest set of his works is the 'Cheaper Illustrated Edition,' in twenty-six volumes, with nearly 2,000 illustrations. The 'Standard Edition,' in twenty-six volumes, is a large, heavy book, and sells little. The 'Popular Edition,' in thirteen volumes, is indifferently produced, and does not compare favourably with five-shilling books at the present time. The 'Pocket Edition' is good of its sort, and makes a very dainty set.

We are, however, promised a new edition of Thackeray, introduced by Mrs. Ritchie, and it is to be hoped that more attention will be given to print, paper, and binding than has hitherto been the case with the cheaper popular editions. The sure result of such attention will be much augmented sales."

#### BRISTOL.

A Bristol correspondent sends us the following memorandum :

"The two authors have sold about equally with us for some years. The new 'Gadshill' Dickens is the first recognised one, and it sells; the 'Crown' is the next saleable (our buyers want good print). We believe a really attractive Thackeray would find a market, but it is useless to tempt the discriminating buyer with old stereos in new covers. The trail of the 'tail of copyright' is over both these authors; the effect of its absolute removal on Scott we know; probably the reprinters will not get the chance with Dickens. As to Thackeray?—we venture to think he will be still selling freely."

#### BRIGHTON.

A Brighton bookseller reports as follows :

"The sale of Dickens's works seems to know no fluctuation; the 'Half-crown' and the 'Crown' editions both appeared opportunely, and supplied a felt want, being clearly printed and well illustrated at popular prices. The 'Crown' edition especially meets with general favour, and until the whole of the series are out of copyright, when competition will inevitably be stronger, we think no new edition is required, and we doubt its success if attempted, however taking in its style.

Nothing but praise can, of course, be said of the 'Gadshill' edition now appearing, and all admirers of Dickens would no doubt gladly be possessed of such a choice issue; but the price necessarily limits the sale.

As regards Thackeray, the sale is still steady, but the demand is not so large as for Dickens. The 'Cheaper Illustrated' edition (as it is called) is the one generally purchased, but there is room for a good illustrated issue, with the principal novels in single volumes, to correspond with the 'Crown' Dickens, more tastily got up than the present 5s. one, known as the 'Popular' edition."

#### BIRMINGHAM.

It will be seen that the correspondents we have quoted above recognise no decline in the sale of Charles Dickens's novels, nor any serious faults in the editions of his works before the public. These views are not upheld by the two valued correspondents whose letters follow. A leading authority on bookselling in Birmingham writes :

"Our experience is that the sale of the

works of Dickens has been on the wane for a considerable time, but the works of Thackeray sell as freely as ever. For years we have hoped for a decent edition of Dickens—an edition on good paper with good print, without introductions, notes, or illustrations. We had hoped that the 'Gadshill' edition would satisfy us on all these points. We are grievously disappointed. The present generation dislike the reproductions of the original drawings—Cruikshank and 'Phiz' charm them not—in fact, there is a great aversion to these old illustrations.

The 'Crown' edition and the 'Gadshill' are the most saleable. We may state here that never have we sold a set of Dickens which has given real delight to the buyer. An edition worthy of Dickens has yet to appear. How different with Scott! From the first he has received such loving care. Has not this care rewarded all those who have striven to produce Scott in so many beautiful forms?

The sale of Thackeray is excellent; the cheaper illustrated edition in twenty-six volumes, and the popular edition in thirteen volumes, have a very large sale. Here too, there is room for improvement. Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. have a new edition in the press, to be in thirteen volumes. We trust no editor will be allowed to meddle with it, and that no introductions or notes will appear. The placing on the title-page of the editor's name in large print is becoming most offensive—it is almost a task to find a book free from the legend, 'With introduction and notes by—.'

With us the modern writers have made no difference to the sale of Thackeray and Dickens, and the sale of Scott increases as years go on."

#### CAMBRIDGE.

From Cambridge we have the following succinct report :

"Dickens and Thackeray are not holding their own with modern writers. There is a fair demand for Dickens, but not such a demand as might be expected in a University town. Thackeray is hardly sold at all, and seems to be dropping out altogether.

The 'Crown' edition of Dickens seems to sell best in this town, and the 'Popular' edition of Thackeray is generally sold to the few purchasers.

We do not consider that any new editions of these writers are called for."

#### OXFORD.

In Oxford the sales of Thackeray's novels appear to exceed those of Dickens, a state of things not reported to us from any other centre. Our correspondent writes :

"Although the sale of Thackeray has for some years exceeded that of Dickens at Oxford, there has been a considerable falling off in both during the past two or three years. This is probably due to the immense number of new works which clamour for the attention of those who can turn aside for a while from the claims of the 'schools' and the lecture-room to read fiction.

As to editions, the ideal ones have not, to my thinking, been yet produced by either of the publishers whose names are intimately connected with Dickens and Thackeray; but whether or not there is room for further new editions is a point on which those could better speak whose experience of the demand for these authors far exceeds that of an Oxford University bookseller."

It is interesting and significant that in the two University cities of Oxford and Cambridge the popularity of Dickens and

Thackeray are on the wane. In the large centres, where the popular demand can be gauged, they hold their own against all comers. We commend our Birmingham correspondent's notes on "edited" editions to the attention of publishers.

#### THE WEEK.

The publishing week has been a singularly quiet one.

Mr. James Bryce's *Impressions of South Africa* invites special mention. Mr. Bryce travelled across South Africa from Cape Town to Fort Salisbury, in Mashonaland, passing through Bechuanaland and Matabeleland. From Fort Salisbury he returned through Manicaland and the Portuguese territories to Beira. Thence, sailing to Delagoa Bay, Mr. Bryce proceeded through the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, Basutoland, and the eastern province of Cape Colony. In these travels Mr. Bryce had no *arrière pensée*; but the political troubles which occurred immediately after his return prompted him to embody his notes and recollections in a book. Mr. Bryce says :

"I have called the book 'Impressions' lest it should be supposed that I have attempted to present a complete and minute account of the country. For this a long residence and a large volume would be required. It is the salient features that I wish to describe. These, after all, are what most readers desire to know; these are what the traveller of a few weeks or months can give, and can give all the better because the details have not become so familiar to him as to obscure the broad outlines.

Instead of narrating my journey, and weaving into the narrative observations on the country and people, I have tried to arrange the materials collected in a way better fitted to present to the reader, in their natural connexion, the facts he will desire to know. Those facts he will desire to have. Those facts would seem to be the following : (1) The physical character of the country, and the aspects of its scenery; (2) the characteristics of the native races that inhabit it; (3) the history of the natives and of the European settlers—that is to say, the chief events which have made the people what they now are; (4) the present condition of the several divisions of the country, and the aspects of life in it; (5) the economic resources of the country, and the characteristic features of its society and its politics."

The book is well produced in large octavo, with a map of South Africa. It contains 600 pages.

After South Africa—*Lullaby Land*. This is a book of selections from the children's songs of Eugene Field, illustrated by Charles Robinson, and introduced by Mr. Kenneth Grahame. A dainty dish to set before a child. Mr. Grahame writes of the No-Man's Land, or Nonsense Land, where "it is with no surprise at all that you greet the Lead Soldier strutting somewhat stiffly to meet you, the Dog with eyes as big as mill wheels following affably at his heel."

"Most people, at one time or another, have travelled in this delectable country, if only in young and irresponsible days. Certain unfortunates, unequipped by nature for a voyage in

such latitudes, have never visited it at all; and assuredly never will. A happy few never quit it entirely at any time. Domiciled in that pleasant atmosphere, they peep into the world of facts but fitfully, at moments; and decline to sacrifice their high privilege of citizenship at any summons to a low conformity.

Of this fortunate band was Eugene Field. He knew the country thoroughly, its highways and its byways alike. Its language was the one he was fondest of talking; and he always refused to emigrate and to settle down anywhere else. As soon as he set himself to narrate the gossip on these, those of us who had been tourists in bygone days, but had lost our return-tickets, pricked up our ears, and listened, and remembered, and knew. The Dinkey-Bird, we recollect, at once, had been singing, the day we left, in the amabilis tree; and there, of course, he must have been singing ever since, only we had forgotten the way to listen. Eugene Field gently reminded us, and the Dinkey-Bird was vocal once more, to be silent never again. Shut-Eye Train had been starting every night with the utmost punctuality; it was we who had long ago lost our way to the booking-office (I really do not know the American for booking-office). Now we can hurry up the platform whenever we please, and hear the doors slam and the whistle toot as we sink back on those first-class cushions. And the Chocolate Cat—why, of course the cat's were all chocolate then! And how pleasantly brittle their tails were, and how swiftly, though coquettish and suckled each day, they sprouted afresh!"

It is thus that Mr. Graham invites old folks to share with young folks Eugene Field's verses, to which Mr. Charles Robinson adds a liberal sprinkling of dainty drawings.

#### NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

##### THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL.

MUSIC FOR THE SOUL: DAILY READINGS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ALEXANDER MACLAURIN, D.D. Hodder & Stoughton. 5s.

REMAN'S LIFE OF JESUS. Translated, with an Introduction, by William G. Hutchinson. Walter Scott, Ltd. 1s. 6d. TRUE AND FALSE AIM, AND OTHER SERMONS. By the late Rev. E. Herbet Evans, D.D. Hodder & Stoughton. 5s.

THE EXPANSION OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. By John M. Lang, D.D. W. Blackwood & Sons. 5s.

THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY GHOST. By the Rev. John Morgan. Hodder & Stoughton.

THE PSALMS. Translated into Welsh by W. Morgan, D.D. Charles J. Clark.

##### HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

THE DUNGEONS OF OLD PARIS. By Tighe Hopkins. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

HEROES OF THE NATIONS: ROBERT E. LEE. By H. A. White. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

LITTLE JOURNEYS TO THE HOMES OF FAMOUS WOMEN. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

NIPPER; OR, EXPLORATIONS AND ADVENTURES ON THE EUPHRATES. By John Punnett Peters, Ph.D. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

B. J. BARNATO: A MEMOIR. By Harry Raymond. Ishbister & Co. 6s.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN BACCHUS DYKE. Edited by Rev. J. T. Fowler. John Murray. 7s. 6d.

THE NOTE-BOOK OF TRISTRAM RIBSON: 1608-1628. Transcribed and edited by James Dallas and Henry G. Porter. Elliot Stock. 1fs.

##### POETRY, CRITICISM, BELLES LETTRES.

IRELAND: WITH OTHER POEMS. By Lionel Johnson. Elkin Mathews. 5s.

THE ENCHANTED RIVER, AND OTHER POEMS. By Augustus Raalli. Digby, Long & Co. 3s. 6d.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON VERSES. By W. Robertson Nicoll. Hodder & Stoughton.

SONGS OF FLYING HORSES. By Dr Edward Willard Watson. Henry T. Coates & Co. (Philadelphia).

THE CHILD OF THE BOWWOMAN, AND OTHER VERSES. By Jean Carlyle Graham. David Nutt.  
SONNETS OF JOSE-MARIA DE HEREDIA. Done into English by Edward B. Taylor. Wm. Doxey (San Francisco).  
VOICES ACADEMIC. By C. Grant Robertson, M.A. Methuen & Co.

AUCASSEN AND NICOLETTE. Second edition. By Francis W. Bourdillon. Macmillan & Co.

TRANSATLANTIC TRAITS. By the Hon. Martin Morris. Elliot Stock.

SELECTIONS FROM THE BRITISH SATIRISTS. Edited by Cecil Headlam. F. H. Robinson.

##### ART BOOKS.

COUNTRY GARLAND OF TEN SONGS FROM THE HESPERIDES OF ROBERT HERRICK. Set to Music by Joseph S. Moorat. Drawings by Paul Woodroffe. George Allen.  
THE ART JOURNAL, 1897. J. S. Virtue & Co., Ltd.

##### TRAVEL AND TOPOGRAPHY.

THE NORTH COAST OF CORNWALL. By John Lloyd Warden. Page. Simpkin Marshall.

IMPRESSIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA. By James Bryce. Macmillan & Co. 18s.

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS IN DEVON AND CORNWALL. By Arthur H. Norway. Illustrated by Joseph Pennell and Hugh Thomson. Macmillan & Co. 6s.

##### EDUCATIONAL.

HARBUIT'S PLASTIC METHOD. By Wm. Harbut. Chapman & Hall. FIRST BOOK OF PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY. By Ralph S. Tarr, B.S. The Macmillan Co. 6s. THE GALLIC WAR. Book III. Edited by John Brown, B.A. Blackie & Son. 1s. 6d. SELECTIONS FROM SIR THOMAS MALORY'S MORTE D'ARTHUR. Edited by William E. Mead. David Nutt. 4s. 6d.

##### JUVENILE BOOKS.

THE WALLYPUG IN LONDON. By G. E. Farrow. Methuen & Co. 3s. 6d. THE GARDEN OF DELIGHT. Fairy Tales by Netta Syrett. Hurst & Blackett. 5s. JUMBLE. Written and Illustrated by Lewis Baumer. C. A. Pearson, Ltd. 2s. 6d. THE SURPRISING ADVENTURES OF SIR TOADY LION. By S. R. Crockett. 6s. AND STORIES FROM THE FAIRIE QUEENE. By Mary Macleod. 6s. Gardner, Darton & Co. CHERRIEWINE: A FAIRY STORY. By Rachel Penn. John Macqueen. 6s. SINGING VERSES FOR CHILDREN. By Lydia A. Conoley. Macmillan & Co. PARTNERS. By H. F. Gethen. BRAVE MEN AND THEIR DEEDS. By M. B. Syng. T. Nelson & Sons. ONE' ISLAND HOME. By G. H. N. Nye. Bonrose & Sons. 3s. 6d. IN STRANGE QUARTERS. By Edwin Hodder. Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.

##### MISCELLANEOUS.

WHEN ALL MEN STARVE. By Charles Gleig. John Lane. 3s. 6d. REVERIES OF A PARAPHRASE. By M. W. L. T. Fisher Unwin. 6s. AUSTRALASIAN DEMOCRACY. By Henry de R. Walker. T. F. Unwin. 6s. SHALL AND WILL: THE IRISH DIFFICULTY. By Gerald Molloy. Blackie & Son. 2s. 6d. IDEALS FOR GIRLS. By the Rev. H. R. Haweis. James Bowden. THE ZOOLOGICAL RECORD. Vol. XXXIII. Gurney & Jackson. THE ISTHMIAN LIBRARY: ROWING. By R. C. Lehmann. A. D. Innes & Co. 6s. THE LONDON UNIVERSITY GUIDE: 1897-8.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### AN ACADEMY OF LETTERS.

Paris: Nov. 21.

I was very surprised to learn that Sardou, Sully, Prudhomme, and Francois Coppée are critics. It would astonish them just as much, and they would surely thank Mr. John E. Yerbury for this new title.

The only two great critics who have a seat in the "Academie Française" are Jules Lemaitre and Anatole France.

These two members of the French Academy are also well-known novelists. No French novel can come up to *Les Rois* of Jules Lemaitre, and *Thais* of Anatole France is the purest and greatest picture of antique life.

#### THE SOCIETY OF ARTS' MEMORIALS.

London: Nov. 19.

I was glad to find my communication on the subject of the S. A. memorials was welcome to your columns, though sorry for the slip on the Sir Harry Vane tablet. This was odd, as I read your article very attentively.

A claim was put in for No. 6 (opposite No. 24) Holles-street as the real birthplace of Lord Byron. But upon investigation this proved to be only based upon hearsay. I ventured, some months back, to advocate the removal of the poet's statue from its obscure position in Hamilton-gardens, Hyde Park, to Cavendish-square. But I fear this was too bold a scheme to be allowed to catch on.

CECIL CLARKE.

#### MR. HENLEY'S ANTHOLOGY.

Bath: Nov. 20.

Your notice of this book, admirably done in other respects, is a little odd, to say the least, in its naive comments upon the Old Testament lyrics which Mr. Henley has seen fit to include in his volume. "Let us thank Mr. Henley," writes your critic, "for his tremendous gift of lyrical passages from the Old Testament. He has arrayed each extract anew in rhythmical lines . . ." He then quotes Psalm cxxxvii., and adds: "Does it not gain—is not its beauty emphasised—by the new arrangement?"

From his ingenuous delight and from his reference, in a later part of his article, to Mr. Henley's "splendid contributions from the Authorised Version" one is almost driven to conclude that a Revised Version is unknown to your reviewer. For it is from the Revised Version that Mr. Henley's excerpts are directly taken; the "tremendous gift," the "new arrangement in rhythmical lines," are all due to the Revisers, and not in the least to Mr. Henley. It is rather humorous to find how many other reviewers like your own, apparently have realised for the first time on opening this anthology that there really is poetry to be found in the Book of Psalms. Let us hope that this startling discovery will induce them to read the poetical books in the Revised Version, where they will find that Mr. Henley has simply transcribed certain passages, and that the "new arrangement" is not so new after all.

Of course, the "rhythmical lines" are but an attempt to reproduce in English the beautiful parallelism of the Hebrew originals. Inasmuch as they may induce some persons to study the Bible with more care, the appearance of these extracts in Mr. Henley's volume may be welcomed. Otherwise, it is a little difficult to account for the presence of these Hebrew lyrics, exquisite as they are, in an anthology of English verse.

ANTHONY C. DEANE.

[Mr. Deane is mistaken. Mr. Henley has used not the Revised Version, but the old Authorised Version. The psalm which our reviewer quoted from Mr. Henley's collection is an example in point. In the Revised Version the poem begins:

"By the rivers of Babylon,  
There we sat down, yea, we wept,  
When we remembered Zion.  
Upon the willows in the midst thereof  
We hanged up our harps."

In Mr. Henley's volume the psalm begins thus:

"By the rivers of Babylon,  
There we sat down, yea, we wept,  
When we remembered Zion.  
We hanged our harps  
Upon the willows in the midst thereof."

Inasmuch as the old version prints the Psalms and other lyrical passages in verses, it was correct of our reviewer to state that Mr. Henley had arranged them anew in rhythmical lines.]

## A POETIC COINCIDENCE.

London: Nov. 22.

The *Quarterly* article on "Some Minor Poets" has supplied matter for copious reference, though no allusion, as far as I am aware, has been made to the similarity, not in rhythmical structure merely, but also in verbal expression, of the stanzas cited by the writer in his remarks on Rudyard Kipling's verse, from that poet's "Story of Uriah" to the poem "Shon Campbell," which appeared in a small booklet of verse published three years ago. The latter poem was characterised, shortly after its issue, as one of the finest ever written by a graduate of Aberdeen University. To those who discern its inwardness, "Shon Campbell" has a haunting quality, and this, with the fact that Kipling's "Story of Uriah" was new to me, may account for the discovery of what, from the corresponding lines of the two poems here placed in juxtaposition, will be regarded, I think, as a curious poetic parallel. Mr. W. A. Mackenzie, editor of *Black and White*, is, it should be stated, the author of "Shon Campbell":

KIPLING.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta,  
Because they told him to,  
He left his wife in Simla.  
On three-fourths his monthly screw.  
Jack Barrett died at Quetta  
The next month's pay he drew.

And when the last Great Bugle Call  
Adown the Hurrah throbs,  
When the last grim joke is entered  
In the big black book of jobs,  
And Quet's graveyards give aye  
Their victims to the air,  
I should not like to be the man  
Who sent Jack Barrett there.

It should in fairness be stated that the last stanza of "Shon Campbell" is somewhat weakened by the necessary hiatus.

J. G.

[We print the above letter as a neat example of the mare's nest in literature. Mr. Mackenzie parodied "Jack Barrett went to Quetta" some years ago, and printed his avowed parody in *Alma Mater*, when he was editing that sprightly paper at Aberdeen University. It was copied into the newspapers, became popular, was set to music, and is about to be included in *The Students' Song Book*, a collection of songs common to the four Scots Universities. It is true, however, that "Shon Campbell" has been received as an original effort in many quarters.]

## "STORIES OF FAMOUS SONGS."

Wimbledon: Nov. 22.

When a reviewer makes false statements his notice of a book ceases to be of any value. In the observations upon my *Stories of Famous Songs* in the ACADEMY of November 20, your reviewer says: "He" (meaning the author) "frankly admits that scores of favourite songs have been omitted, and a brief inspection of the index is enough to show that he has not exaggerated his own shortcomings." Now this is absolutely untrue. I make no such admission; and "a brief inspection of the index" will at once show that it is your reviewer who has wilfully exaggerated and not I. In the index there are no less than six hundred and sixty-five songs and ballads to which I refer in the body of my work; the histories and origins of which I tell, or about which I relate some-

thing new, or give particulars not generally known.

Now, as to his first misrepresentation of my words. This is what I say in my Introduction: "Of course there are dozens of songs—familiar friends to hundreds of people—that will not be found in this volume. If there is no history of any moment connected with the composition of any particular song, it is impossible to tell one." I think the truth is very different from your reviewer's presentation of the facts before him, which in his hurry he has failed to grasp. Every famous song with a history is included in *Stories of Famous Songs*.

As to my arrangement of the various chapters and their contents, which seems to disturb your reviewer, I beg to say that if he had read my book carefully, and not in "hot haste," he would have seen that I followed out the only serviceable plan in a work that was avowedly written for the general reader. I disclaim all intention to provide a reference guide. In his remarks, your reviewer more than once forgets what is due to himself and the honest labours he presumes to criticise, and grows impertinent. I deny that there is anything disorderly in my treatment of my self-imposed task. I chose my own methods and carried them through as consistently as the vastness of the subject and the material would admit of. I am accused, by this wonderful purist, of having a "vicious style." It seems to me that a reviewer who misrepresents the aim and object of the work he is supposed to digest and criticise, and who deliberately misquotes his author, should exercise more discretion in the choice of his words.

S. J. ADAIR FITZ-GERALD.

[Our reviewer writes: "I am sorry that Mr. Fitz-Gerald supposes me to undervalue his contribution to the literature of the subject. But by confining himself to the pleasure of relating the stories of such lays and lyrics as were written under some romantic, pathetic, or entertaining circumstances, and by omitting all mention of 'dozens' (not 'scores'): I apologise for the inaccuracy) of other 'celebrated effusions,' he has fallen short of what he should have striven after—finality: it was this that I regretted. I still believe, too, that the work might have been arranged upon some more evident principle of order without its being reduced to a pedantic reference guide or dictionary for the library.' As to Mr. Fitz-Gerald's literary style, I have the misfortune to dislike it. By the way, Mr. Fitz-Gerald uses my words, "hot-haste," in such a way that the reader might well suppose that it was I who had admitted reading his book in that manner, whereas it was my charge against the compiler. I, unhappily, had to read the book through with deliberation."]

## PERSIAN ROSE-LEAVES.

London: Nov. 21.

That dear old sceptic, Omar the Tentmaker, is once more the object of poetical manipulation, as I gather from a paragraph in your issue of the 13th inst. That he will look quite respectable in his Anglo-Saxon garb goes without saying. The English reader of to-day, like Boileau's French reader of yore, "means to be respected." It is, therefore, with a chastened voice that the gross Oriental sensualist drawls out:

"When I am dead, wash my body in wine. Say no prayers over my grave, but sing a song in praise of the grape, and if, on Judgment-day, you wish to find me again, search for me in the dust under the tavern-door."

This quatrain, which has been much admired for its subtle mysticism, reminds me of a

passage in modern Greek, of which the following is a translation:

"When I am dead, remember  
To bury my immortal  
Remains in Yakoum's vineyard."

The poor fellow who wrote the song was anything but a follower of Bacchus. He was a classic scholar, well-known at Constantinople, who, when his eyesight failed him, took to rhyming anacreontics for his amusement. May not Omar Khayyám have been a reveler of the same Platonic kind? What little is known of his life points to the conclusion that he was not an idle debauchee, since, besides dabbling in astronomy, he is credited with having composed a treatise on algebra. He would have made a rare hash of his problems had he been addicted to the bottle. His bacchic effusions ought not to have been taken seriously. Who, then, and what was this Omar? it will be asked. The plain answer is, that he was one out of a host of versifiers, more or less known to fame, who flourished between the tenth and fourteenth centuries, and of whom Persia has some reason to be proud, inasmuch as no other literature in the world can boast of such giants in point of fecundity. To cite a few instances. Ferdussi's epic, the famous "Shahnameh," consists of no less than 120,000 metrical lines, nearly eight times the number of verses contained in Tasso's "Gerusalemme." The founder of the order of the Dancing Dervishes, Djelal-Eddin Roumy, runs Ferdussi hard with 40,000 rhymed distichs constituting his "Metsveni," a moral poem, if you please, and exclusive of his "Divan." No less prolific were Saadi the Blessed, Enweri the Luminous, Hafiz the Preserver. Our friend Omar with his 467 quatrains is a perfect dwarf when compared to his brethren in Helicon, but though less voluminous than they, he is as outrageously improper as any of them. To the intense sorrow of his French translator, M. Nicolas was obliged to admit that Omar is but too often "d'un matérialisme repoussant." The fact is, that, apart from the indescribable obscenities with which it abounds, the poetry of all these turban'd and fur-cap'd worthies is no poetry at all in the true sense of the word, and one might look in vain in their rhymed farrago for a single trait, a single thought or image out of the common. The two principal characteristics of Persian poetry are uniform dullness and intolerable prolixity. It is quite refreshing to turn from those effete productions to Goethe's "Westöstlicher Divan." Hafiz has been styled the Anacreon of Persia. There is nothing, however, in his poetical baggage that comes up to the exquisite lyric,

"Dir mit Wohlgeruch zu kosen"

&c., addressed to Suleika, a perfect gem for delicacy of thought and structure, or to the charming duet between Suleika and her lover, Hatem, when she asks him to explain to her the dream that she has had about her ring.

"Sag Poeet, sag Profete!  
Was bedeutet dieser Traum?"

Indeed, it is marvellous what the plastic genius of the German bard managed to do with the disjointed, shapeless materials at his disposal. To revert to Omar. A literal prose translation of the "Rabayat" would, if conscientiously carried out, be a boon to the English reader. It would enable him to form an opinion and judge for himself as to the merits of its author, whether as a poet or a thinker. Not much reliance is to be placed on the French version mentioned in this letter. I have it on the authority of one of the best known Orientalists that M. Nicolas is only partially faithful—assez fidèle—to the Persian text, a doubtful recommendation at best. But it has hitherto been the fate of Omar to be presented with a mask upon his face. THOMAS DELTA.

## INEDITED LEOPARDI MSS.

Rome: Oct. 25.

On June 29, 1898, occurs the centenary of the birth of Giacomo Leopardi, the poet of sadness, who has so many admirers in Italy and abroad. The date will be celebrated in Italy with some enthusiasm, the organisation of the festivities being entrusted to Senator Mariotti, a noted man of letters, and a conscientious student of Leopardi. Signor Mariotti conceived the design of making the date of the centenary rejoicings coincide with that of the publication of some inedited MSS of the poet. These are rather numerous, and are an heirloom of the State; but so strange have been the difficulties and complications that have arisen in their regard, that it may be well to here say a word or two about them.

On the death of Leopardi, Senator Ranieri, the friend who for seven years had harboured the poet in his own house, gathered the unpublished MSS., made some of them public property, and put away in a trunk those which, for one reason or another, he judged it just then injudicious to publish. The trunk was covered with green baize, placed inside a large wicker basket, and collocated in a corner of the senator's sleeping apartment. It remained there from the year 1837 till Signor Ranieri's death in 1888. His servants tell how it was his custom every morning to strew flowers on the basket, the only relic of his friend. On Ranieri's death the *Odyssey* of the MSS. began.

The senator willed his own and all other MSS. in his house to the State, but he inserted in his testament the condition that nothing should be touched during the lifetime of his two female servants. As these servants absolutely refused permission for the baize-covered trunk to be taken away, the State resolved to wait patiently for the last end of two aged and obstinate females. But it had reckoned without the intervention of the poet's nephew, Count Giacomo Leopardi, who now stepped in and claimed the MSS. as his. Senator Ranieri, he contested, had merely been the depositary. Litigation commenced, and as it seemed likely to be of indefinite duration, it was agreed to entrust the MSS. to some uninterested person. Senator Santamaria Nicolini was chosen, but he being soon after named to a judgeship in Venice, handed them over to a charitable institution in Naples.

The public began to grow interested in the matter, and the scholars of the country thought it time something should be done to put an end to the interminable dispute. Senator Mariotti, on the 9th of last April, raised an interpellation in the Senate, and Giosuè Carducci rose to speak on behalf of the relics of his brother poet. In the name of European culture he demanded that the MSS. should be given to the State. Independently of testamentary equity, there was something that gave the State full rights: there was the sentiment of the nation, the prospect of doctrine, the certainty of art. The Minister for Public Instruction replied that everything possible would be done; but nothing was done, for the old women continued to live on, and to be stubborn as ever. Then, as the date of the centenary drew near, and no hope of amicable arrangements dawned, it fortunately occurred to someone that a law existed according to which expropriation of an author's rights was accorded to the State every time that it was a question of public utility. This providential law was as recent as 1882. It was at once availed of: public utility was declared, 500 francs was given as compensation to the two old servants, and a few days ago the wicker basket with its precious contents was escorted by carabiniers from Naples to Rome, and placed in the Casanatense Library of this city.

On Sunday last a Commission named by the Minister of Public Instruction, and of which Giosuè Carducci was president and Senator Mariotti vice-president, proceeded to open the trunk and examine the MSS.

They include letters between Leopardi and many illustrious Italians and foreigners; poems, both playful and satirical; a tragedy in verse, entitled *Marie Antoinette*, and dated July, 1816; philosophical disquisitions in prose; and, most curious of all, an address to the god of Evil—Arimane. The King of Things, the Master of the World—he of whom the poet declares he has himself been, by his very existence, the greatest preacher—is invoked to grant that the seventh *lustrum* of that existence will not be allowed to finish, for of life the poet can bear no more (*non posso più della vita!*).

These documents are regarded as precious. They will serve to complete the history of that life, which Leopardi himself describes as "a romance that relates few outward adventures, and these of the most ordinary description; but which is the record of the interior vicissitudes and struggles of a soul naturally noble and tender from the day of its first awaking to consciousness even till its end."

## BOOK REVIEWS REVIEWED.

"The Beth Book." By Sarah Grand.  
THIS novel has had a mixed reception, all the more mixed because its gold and its alloy seem to be clearly defined and easily separable. Therefore, even admiring critics have found much to condemn in it, angry ones much to praise. The *Saturday Review* is so far divided that it prints two reviews of the book, embodying opinions widely, though not diametrically, opposed. F. H. sees no merit in the story of Beth's childhood. The three hundred pages in which it is developed are "irrelevant and foolish drivel." F. H.'s *confrère*, "Frank Danby," takes a widely different view of this part of the book. She finds in Beth a study of childhood, "sympathetic, convincing, and complete." The two critics are more in agreement about the later portions of the book "Frank Danby," who is again the more merciful critic, writes:

"Unlike the majority of women who write on unsavoury subjects, Sarah Grand has immense talent, almost amounting to genius, and she is impelled to her theme by honest, if unreasonable, conviction. She is straightforward, has no private ends to serve, does not drag in vice to give herself or her book an advertisement, and shakes a wild head at the laurel leaves that might so easily be hers if she would abandon her vagaries. But apparently she must preach her wonderful doctrine of the equality of the sexes, she must jumble up medical and moral questions in one inharmonious whole, she must ruin her own works of art and deface them, with iconoclastic fervour, by all the refuse of the controversies that raged twenty years ago around the dead C. D. Acts. It is a strange and hideous obsession."

The *Daily News* thinks that Beth's childhood is "by far the most attractive and convincing part of the narrative," and the *Weekly Sun* is so much of this opinion that it confines its notice to these pages.

The *Spectator*, on the other hand, is scornful throughout. The story is, to this critic, only

"a prodigiously elaborate study of a tempera-

ment merging into an impassioned and polemical pamphlet on the marriage question. Lastly, the author's arguments have all been set forth in one of her previous novels. All that she has done is to give them a cruder and more livid setting."

The *Chronicle* brings us back to the divided judgment:

"To sum up—wherever Sarah Grand has worked according to the theories of novel-writing expressed by Beth, the literary aspirant, and by Sir George Galbraith, the pasteboard automation, the book fails; it even tires and irritates. . . . Whenever, on the other hand, she works within the accepted conventions and by the recognised canons of the novelist's art, she charms and interests us."

MAY criticism be defined "The Tormentor." as one man one vote? We By Benjamin Swift. are often tempted to ask this question; but the opinions expressed by the *Chronicle* and the *British Weekly* on Mr. Swift's new story compel us to articulate it. Just read this. It is the *Chronicle* that speaks:

"When we read Mr. Benjamin Swift's *Nancy Noon* we saw, and said, that the author had a good deal to learn in the art of storytelling. We greatly feared (though this we did not say) that by the time he had learned this good deal he would have forgotten much of his originality, and that power would be sacrificed to artistry. We are extremely glad to own that we were mistaken. *The Tormentor* is original from first word to last, original in conception, method, and in its very phrasing. Most of the blemishes and deficiencies which gravely marred the former work have here entirely, or almost entirely, disappeared. The construction is no longer chaotic, the movement of the story no longer spasmodic. In *Nancy Noon* Mr. Swift was very obviously of the school of George Meredith. In *The Tormentor* he is of no school; he is himself. And we like the original much better than the derived Mr. Swift."

Now hear the *British Weekly*:

"No. This will not do. It is a feverish recital of a feverish, hag-ridden dream. I am referring to Mr. Benjamin Swift's new story, *The Tormentor*, just published by Mr. Fisher Unwin. Few welcomed more warmly than I did the originality and power of his previous work, *Nancy Noon*. It had great faults, but it had merits so striking as to make it one of the most remarkable and promising books of the year. . . . On the whole, one might hope very much from it, but would not be inclined to prophesy. The whole question was whether the writer would take the path of his strength or the path of his weakness. Unfortunately, he has chosen the downward way."

Between these opposing views comes that of *Literature*, which gives the story a notice filling a column. This critic advises Mr. Swift to study Balzac:

"Nothing is in its way finer in literature than Balzac's treatment of the abnormal, and from it the author of *The Tormentor* might draw valuable lessons of restraint and lucidity. It seems worth while to give this advice, for we feel that Mr. Swift possesses some power of penetrating below the commonplace surface of things, though he has yet to acquire the art of seizing only what is essential and of presenting it with clearness to the mind of the average cultivated reader."

"Jerome,"  
By Mary E.  
Wilkins. This story has probably done as much to plant Miss Wilkins's fame in this country as any of her other works. The reviewers are very kind. Yet the *Spectator* is not alone in pointing out that *Jerome* "will hardly bear comparison in point of construction with some of Miss Wilkins's earlier and shorter stories." But, says the *Spectator*, "Miss Wilkins . . . shows us that in the qualities of artistic reticence, nobility of sentiment, and grace of treatment the Old World has nothing to teach, but rather something to learn from, the New Englander."

The *Daily News* says of the story: "It is a corner of life seen through the small end of a telescope, none the less vivid in its colouring, definite in lines, or complex in its manifestations because of the minuteness of its presentation." After noting the stern, Puritan *milieu* of the tale, and sketching a few of the characters, this reviewer says:

"The more attractive qualities nurtured by

Puritanism show themselves in *Lucina*, the dainty, pliant heroine, staunch to the core, and over whose personality, purity of soul lingers like a perfume. In *Lucina*'s elderly maiden aunt, Camilla Meritt, we have the same crowning grace of exquisite purity, expressing itself in 'the grace and dignity of ineffable ladyhood.' Some of the most charming pages in the book describe this lady, 'who was old as a poem or an angel might be, with the lovely meaning of her still uppermost and most evident.' The story, if over long, is distinguished by Miss Wilkins's most delightful qualities, her extreme accuracy of touch, and delicate spiritual insight."

The *Daily Telegraph* and the *Manchester Guardian* agree with the *Spectator* in noting Miss Wilkins's inability to attain her usual measure of artistic success on a large canvas. *Jerome*, says the *Telegraph*,

"is an excellent novel of its kind, very graceful, artistic, pretty; but it would have been all the better for a little ruthless editing. If some faithful friend had told Miss Wilkins that her subject and her plot were too small for her five

hundred pages, it would not have done her any harm."

The *St. James's* critic has been thoroughly captivated by this story. He writes:

"It is difficult to avoid rhapsodizing over the beauty of her style. She writes without passion, but with an extraordinary tenderness; never challenging our admiration with large effects and bold sweeps of the brush, but captivating us with her exquisite miniature-work, perfect in every detail yet with none of the severity of such perfection. *Le mot juste* is so happily hers in her every description that, in mentioning any of her characters, one is tempted to quote her own words about them. She has brought quite a crowd of people into the story and worked with equal conscientiousness at all of them. We were reluctant to find the central figures of Jerome and his *Lucina* the least interesting of any; but so it was. Many virtuous young men and harmless maidens might be given for such characters as Jerome's wonderful mother, the grim Paulina Maria, the simpering Belinda, Squire Eben, and Aunt Camilla. One remembers them as one remembers personal acquaintances."

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